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THE
NABOB AT HOME;

OR,

THE RETURN TO ENGLAND.

BY

THE AUTHOR OF "LIFE IN INDIA."

[*Mrs. Norton*]

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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THE
NABOB AT HOME.

CHAPTER I.

Yet Caledonia, dear are thy mountains,
Round their white summits though elements war,
'Tho' cataracts foam, 'stead of smooth flowing fountains,
I sigh for the valley of dark Loch na Garr!

BYRON.

DOCTOR M'ALPIN, like most men in India, had for years after his arrival, sighed for the time when he should be enabled to revisit his native land—when he should be enabled with honour and credit to support

the dignity of his ancient house ; and like many others also, he had deferred his departure from year to year, though many a year had passed since he had realized all that he had originally fixed upon as the utmost extent of his wishes.

When he had the power, and could go at any time, he found that “it was ridiculous for a man in the meridian of life to withdraw from active employment, and to sit down contented with little more than the patrimony of his ancestors.” Then, “it was unwise to resign a splendid appointment, which put fortune in his power, and gave him the opportunity of serving his friends.” The death of his father and mother depressed his spirits, and “made him less anxious about returning just so soon”—that of his grandfather followed, and put him in possession of Fernbraes, the estate of his forefathers; more fertile in purple heath-bells than golden grain.

“He was now the head of the house, and consequently more was expected of him,

and since he had staid so long, he might even stay a little longer, and go amongst his own people, as the only surviving male branch ought to do."

Last of all, came tidings of the death of his only and much beloved sister—the companion of his childhood—the friend of his youth—one whose image never rose to his mind unassociated with recollections of early happiness and tender love. She had been his confidant and counsellor in all his projects—in all his wishes. She had listened with unwearying patience to his early and ardent desires to see the world—she had walked with him over the heath and on the sea-shore — she had talked of his future hopes and his future prospects a thousand and a thousand times, and she, in the pride and fondness of sisterly affection, had foreseen and foretold his prosperous return; and though long years had passed since, this stroke brought her before him with the renewed feelings of early affection.

He felt her arms upon his neck—he heard the blessing which came from a bursting heart, when she kissed him at parting, and he looked up as if he almost expected to see the sister of his love, leaning over him as she had done then; but she for months had lain in the dark and narrow house before the information of his loss had reached him, and their earthly intercourse was finally closed.

“I have waited,” he said, speaking to himself, as was his usual custom when any thing agitated his mind, “until one year after another has taken every one from me that ever I wished to see; and now,” he spoke in bitterness, “I’ll wait no longer. Am I not old, and rich, and childless, and friendless, and who is to come after me in Fernbraes for which I have done so much?—who is to uphold the honour of the ancient roof-tree? Much have I expended, and much have I remitted for planting and improving the old place, which in my day

was a thought o'er bare, though it cannot be that now—but I fear the plantings will never shelter me or mine.”

Strange as it may seem, the doctor now actually set about making the preparations which he had so long talked of and delayed; and he sometimes pleased himself with thinking, that in his sister's family, he might still find some one to love and cherish.

But to go back to the motives which had influenced his life.  The truth was, that the worthy doctor, like many others, after a few years' residence in the country had lost the ardent desire to return to his birthplace, which at first tormented him  which he always expressed, and fancied that he still felt—years had brought new connexions and new friendships, and though they never occupied in his heart the place of those he had left round his father's hearth-stone, yet they exercised his kindly affections, and diminished the feeling of loneliness and isolation which every one, possessed of the least sen-

sibility must experience, on making a solitary entry into life in a strange land.

Youth is slow to reason but quick to feel, and he, who had been accustomed to find himself a first object—a central point at Fernbraes—felt wonder and mortification, on his first arrival, on discovering how small a space he occupied in Indian society. His local consequence had quite left him—he was no longer the heir apparent—“the young laird”—nothing more than Mr. Assistant-surgeon M'Alpin; the peculiarity of whose Gaelic idiom and national predilections, were his most marked claims to notice. Then he sighed to return; but time, which changes all things where there is any material to work upon (and, in his case, nature had done her part), changed the raw Highland lad into the able and experienced physician; unremitting in his duty, indefatigable in his exertions for the wellbeing of those under his care, and as attentive to the lowest native as to those whose life was favour, and whose health was for-

tune to him; and it also changed his situation from assistant-surgeon, tossing about with a corps, to that of "residency-surgeon" at Lucknow. His professional abilities procured him fortune—his intrinsic worth secured him friends—acquaintance with the world softened his extravagant prejudices; only leaving just enough of national peculiarity, to give some spirited touches to his character, and preserve his individuality.)

(The kindness of his heart, and perhaps some tincture of his feudal feelings, extended to his numerous household; over whom he ruled with patriarchal sway, having bondmen and bondwomen born in his house. His servants rarely wished to leave him, and he seldom discharged them; so that, to use their own phrase, "their children's children eat of his salt, and dwelt in the shadow of his protection." When delinquencies were committed, they knew "that the sahib's heart was tender;" and when his anger had expended itself, "sweet words," and a list of those who depended upon their exertions, and must suffer along with them, "would

set all right;" and the good doctor, though perhaps he would not like to have had any one make the comparison, enjoyed something of the satisfaction amongst his black retainers at Lucknow, which he expected amongst those of his own colour at Fernbraes; and he had also the satisfaction whenever any thing went wrong, to attribute the annoyance, whatever it might be, to "this vile country;" and to be certain that in his own he would be exempt from it. Roguery and ingratitude were never heard of there, at least he never recollected to have met with them.

When he indulged in such excesses of enthusiasm, which were apt to break out on the receipt of letters from Europe, or of new books from the "modern Athens," Colonel and Mrs. Cheapstow, with whom most of his evenings were passed, never omitted bringing to his memory a little history of whisky-punch, which he would rather have forgotten.

"There are many things you know, doctor," Mrs. Cheapstow used to say, "which

are better in memory than in reality; the strength remains when the harshness is gone. I used to think, from your description that goat-milk cheese was a very fine thing, until I saw the biting, moulded, blue reality, which was sent to you from Fernbraes; looking as venerable as if it had come out of Herculaneum."

"And the Highland nectar, doctor, which you promised us," said the colonel; "do you recollect what execrable stuff it proved; and what a headach you got by persisting to drink two or three glasses of it; and how in the morning you were fairly driven to confess, that it had not just the relish it used to have at Fernbraes, and that for 'this vile country,' claret when it was well cooled, was a more suitable beverage?"

"There is no use in recollecting things that would be better forgotten," said the doctor, laughing, "and constantly keeping one in mind of one's degeneracy."

The doctor had thus staid from year to year, grumbling, and increasing his fortune,

until he had passed what has been popularly called middle life, that is to say fifty, or in more polite phrase, that period which a French courtier out of respect for the feelings of his monarch, who had lived half a century, and yet did not like to be thought older than other people, declared to be, *l'age de tout le monde*, and he found that his hair had worn high off his temples, and had changed its originally yellow tint for white. The change in colour, however, was not very perceptible, as (in conformity to the military etiquette of his day, he still continued to wear powder.) His regular and well-proportioned features had become thin and pale, though his light gray eye still retained some of the penetrating earnestness of former years, particularly when his enthusiasm was excited, or the nervous irritability which climate had ingrafted on his naturally acute feelings was called into action.

The world laughs at enthusiasm in any age, though in youth it sometimes meets with toleration, as one of the follies which

time will correct: but notwithstanding the general voice against it, observation proves, that it is the high spring-tide of feeling which carries the mind forward over all obstacles; and, under the curb of reason, leads to excellence — at least, the good doctor thought so; and perfectly agreed with the philosopher who has defined enthusiasm to be “a transport of the mind, whereby it is led to think and imagine things in a sublime, surprising, and yet probable manner.” His thin, tall figure retained its original rectitude of line, though a fall and pliancy in the shoulders, showed that there also climate had done its work.

“He was,” as he said himself, “compounded of excellent bone and capital muscle; though certainly a little relaxed by the fiery furnace, in which he had been tried for such a length of time.”

However, he trusted the good sharp breezes, would set all that to rights again, and make a new man of him.

When not on duty, or occasions of cere-

mony, his unvarying dress was his white nankeen jacket, waistcoat, and trousers, shoes of the same material, and a light broad-brimmed solar hat, covered with white muslin; so that in his whole dress he had not one coloured speck, and if his élothes were not as remarkable for the tightness of their fit as if they had been cut in Bond-street, they were at least very much so for the snow-like purity of their tint. The like taste displayed itself through his whole dwelling; for though he covered his tables and couches with the books he was reading, or might read, he never suffered this negligence on his own part, to be an excuse for his servants permitting the least particle of dust to harbour amongst them; and though he liked his dogs to run about through his apartments, it was not until his dooriah* had performed their ablutions.

In this way the doctor had sailed down the stream of time in all the independent ease and quiet uniformity of a bachelor's life at Lucknow; and had become so at-

* Dooriah—dogkeeper.

tached to the persons and things about him, that when after his departure for Europe was fixed, he visited his friends for the last time, he could not bring himself to say "farewell;" and left them under the idea that they should see him again. Most of his servants accompanied him to Calcutta, and thus continuing to him for a little longer, the satisfaction of being surrounded by the faces he was accustomed to see.

Dr. M'Alpin, like many others when they have almost attained the summit of their wishes, felt rather sorrow than joy in the prospect of the near accomplishment of his desire. He had been in the habit for thirty years of attributing every evil and annoyance he had met with, to this "vile country;" but now that he was upon the point of leaving it for ever, he thought of the long years of ease and independence he had enjoyed, passed in social and friendly intercourse with many whom he could never hope to see again; he thought of those whom death had separated from him, and retraced in his

mind the lapse of years, by the number of gaps it had made in the list of those who had started with him in the career of fortune. This depressing state of feeling, led him back to the changes which had taken place in that home to which he was going.

“I wonder if they will know me,” he said, as he walked up and examined his own face in the mirror. “I wonder if they will know the rosy-cheeked, curly-headed, active lad, who left them in the pride of youth and expectation; in the pale face, sunk eyes, and bald forehead which I see before me; and yet I fear that I am more changed in mind than I am in body. I cannot deny to myself, that no one can be expected to have patience with my nervous and irritable habits of life, but Cussim Ali, who kens them so well ; but alas!” he continued, perusing every line of his own features in the glass, as if he saw them for the first time, “Who is there to recollect me ? They are all gone ! and the young ones who are now in their places, are after my day.

He turned his back upon the mirror, and walked up and down the room ;—his eye fell upon a volume of picturesque views in Scotland, which had been amongst his first purchases on arriving in India. “It is my native land,” he said aloud, “and wherever a Scotchman passes his life, he ought to return to lay his bones there.”

“Sahib,”* said Cussim Ali, who had been waiting quietly, and took the doctor’s soliloquy for an order, “your slave waits, what is the sahib’s order?”

“I have no order, Cussim,” answered his master, “but do not forget that the sircar† gets warm clothes, and every thing fit for you to go on board ship, since you have made up your mind to go with me.”

“Yes, sahib, it is my nisib‡ to cross the sea. I have eaten your salt, for many years, and now that I have lost all, and that no one of my house remains—not a son to lay

* Sahib—sir, gentleman.

† Sircar—native accountant. ‡ Nisib—fate.

my head in the earth," and a tear strayed over the old man's face, and down his white beard, which he wiped away with his long sleeve, "I shall go with you, sahib, who is my father and my mother; and when I die, you will put me in the ground, and not leave me to have the burial of a dog."

"Make yourself easy, Cussim Ali," replied the doctor, "if that happens, every thing shall be done properly."

"Good, sahib, very good, I go with you."

Cussim and his master had borne the heat and burden of the day together, and though warm attachment is not certainly the characteristic of native character, yet it is to be found; and amidst the general apathy and heartlessness, which must be more or less the consequence of servitude, examples of true affection may be met with.

Possibly masters in all countries are too apt to forget, that the affections of the human heart cannot be bought,—that sim-

ple justice cannot purchase love, and that nothing short of affection can create affection. Mere attention, which is bestowed equally upon the comfort of servants and cattle, cannot excite gratitude.

CHAPTER II.

Five-and-twenty years ago—

Alas how time escapes ! 'tis even so—

With frequent intercourse, and always sweet

And always friendly we were wont to cheat

A tedious hour.

As some grave gentleman in Terence says,

('Twas therefore much the same in ancient days)

“ Good luck, we know not what to-morrow brings—

Strange fluctuation of all human things !”

COWPER.

ARRIVED at Calcutta, Dr. M'Alpin's boats anchored off the Old Fort Ghaut, just behind the house of his friend Mr. Curzon, with whom he meant to take up his residence until his departure for Europe. They had arrived in the country in the same fleet, and though they had not met for years, had

always maintained a friendly correspondence.

The doctor's spirits which had been depressed by his parting with his friends, Colonel and Mrs. Cheapstow at Lucknow, were greatly cheered by this meeting with his old friend Curzon. His gray eyes twinkled as he shook hands with him, and each for a moment regarded the changes which time had made on the other. "I have not enjoyed so much satisfaction since I left Lucknow," said the doctor with an affectionate smile ; "the sight of a friend's countenance, Curzon, is the best remedy for the evils of life. Ye have done more for me in five minutes, than all my reasoning and all my philosophy on board the boat, was able to effect in a whole fortnight."

"Our satisfaction is equal M'Alpin ; the time is come when neither you nor I can set about making new friends, and of consequence, we doubly value those who are left to us. Few, very few of those who came out with us, are in existence now ; and the

young men of the present day are of a different stamp," answered Mr. Curzon.

A composed and gentle expression sat on his open brow, he spoke in a low articulate tone, which perfectly suited the general character of his appearance, and his tall thin figure, with long legs and hanging arms, was one often seen amongst those whose nervous system has been shaken by a long residence in an undermining climate.

The two friends spent the first evening of their meeting in mutual questions relative to their own affairs, and those who had been, or still were, the friends of both parties. As there was no company they dined above, in the drawing-room, where the air circulated more freely than on the ground-floor.

When dinner was over, they had their chairs and hookahs placed in the verandah which overlooked the square, and enjoyed the little cool air which came off the great tank in the centre, always kept fresh and full by communication with the river. The shrubs and flowers which bound the broad

gravel without the enclosure round the tank had a pleasing effect in the light of a clear sweet night. The open windows of every well-lighted house round the square, added much to the cheerfulness of the scene, and smoking their hookahs as they sipped their wine, they spoke with the unreserve of those who felt that their thoughts and their feelings were matter of interest to each other.

“You,” said Mr. Curzon, “have the near prospect of visiting your native land—I never shall.”

“And why not, what prevents ye, if ye wish it?”

“Money—money, I have expended so much in the prosecution of my researches in Asiatic literature that I shall never be able to quit the country.”

“But with your allowances how is that possible?”

“You forget, the monthly expense of learned natives transcribing for me, has been a fortune of itself. I can show you any day

you please my college in this house. You know I must have them to do the drudgery for me, even if our climate was a different one. How many men did our English Johnson employ in transcribing for his great work?"

"Doubtless that is a heavy expense, but your library is a mine of itself."

"Yes, if you consider the sums sunk there. It was impossible for me to prosecute some of my works without the purchase of an immense number, sometimes of all the manuscript copies of a particular author I might want, at any price which might be demanded for them by natives who understand their own interest too well not to make the most of it. They know that I must have the thing, therefore never scruple to make me pay for it. You know the uncertainty of a written character in a country so extensive as this, where men of learning have chosen to make variations, not only in the character, but in its signification, the

truth of which it is impossible to ascertain, without an accurate comparison of their different works."

"I know that from my own experience," answered the doctor. "Though without any pretensions to be a scholar, I know something of the Persian poets; and I know too, that book-making is not the lucrative trade in this country, that it is in our own."

"Ours may be called a labour of love, as it produces neither money nor fame. How many men of talent in India have spent their lives in the prosecution of knowledge and oriental learning, and have dropped into the grave without one word of record or of praise! The literary labours of men in Europe have little in common with us; in this distant field the pursuit of oriental literature cuts a man off from the correspondence of the *savans* of our own country, as also from the hope of fame or emolument. Those who have laboured to clear a path through the intricacies of the various languages of the East, who have at an enormous sacrifice

of private fortune, health and even life, toiled to provide the means of profitable study, are forgotten. I believe I may venture to say, without fear of contradiction, that the most useful works in all the different branches of oriental literature, Hindoo and Mahommedan law not excepted, are from the pens of Europeans, many of them acknowledged by the learned natives to excel in accuracy and extent the works of their own scholars."

"It is a hard, though I fear a true statement," answered the doctor.

"Steady prosecution of a worthy object is undoubtedly a pleasure amidst all the toil and discouragements, which may attend it; and we have the satisfaction to think, that our labours have not been in vain, in the main object. We have not only laboured usefully in opening their literary stores to the natives themselves, but in providing tools to carry on the work. We have helped them to the fixed standard of a pointed language, or I should rather say languages,—for, what we have done in one, we have done in many

—I am not so enthusiastic as to believe, that spreading knowledge over a country like India can be speedily accomplished; but we have made the natives feel the superiority of printed books, over their inaccurate and expensive manuscripts; we have put knowledge within the reach of those who are not rich, we have even shown them a way to better their fortunes, while they benefit their country;—and those whose names are unknown amongst the *litterati* of Europe, and whose bones are mouldering in the dust, will yet be recognised by the natives of this country, as benefactors, whose deeds shall live after them.”

“ I wish,” said the doctor, warmly, “ that there was any one willing and able to give the world a faithful record of the services of those whose talents have never been estimated but by a few literary friends, and two or three well-informed natives; and I wish that ye would just part with your Moonshies,*

* Moonshie—Hindostanee teacher.

and Mollahs,* and Pundits† at once, and before many years go about I might have the satisfaction to see you in the Land o'Cakes, where I think ye have not yet been."

"It will not do, my good friend, the day is too far spent for me now to alter my plan;" if I did 'resolve,' it would be, but to 'resolve and die the same.' I could not remodel my habits if I would. I never was fond of money, perhaps I should say careful of it; though at the same time I may say that I have never gone beyond my allowances. I have lived all my life in ease, and supported the dignity of my station in the eyes of the natives, which I certainly think is a duty every man owes to his country as well as to himself. I might, certainly, by rigid economy amass a little money even now, out of my ample receipts, but what would it signify? With a little I could not do in Europe what I have been accustomed to do here. I am

* Mollah—learned Persian.

† Pundit—learned Hindoo.

too old to begin life anew, so shall just jog on in the ease and abundance I have ever enjoyed, until I quit the stage, without changing the scene. If I had been fortunately married, if I had a family to expect me, I could make an exertion for them; but I have none dependant upon me, therefore am at liberty *to walk on* my own way."

"Yes, all that may be unfortunately true for you and me, still every Briton, wherever he spends his life, likes to close his eyes in his own land; and though it is not the lot of many, it is the prospect we all look to," answered the doctor.

"And there is reason and just feeling in the sentiment," said Mr. Curzon, "and had I my life to go over again, I would keep it in view; as it is, I am too much a citizen of the world to sacrifice the comfort of the remaining years of my life, for the satisfaction of lying by my ancestors."

Mr. Curzon was in his habits of life, sentiments, and feelings exactly an "Old Indian"—what the youths of that time called

a “regular Qui Hie.” The quiet unobtrusive kindness of his manners, bore a stamp of the climate by which they had been formed—a climate which disposes people to think and to order for the comfort of their friends, rather than to make personal exertion; liberal, gentlemanly, and friendly, unwilling to impose restraint upon others, or to submit to it himself, he received his friends into his family with sincere pleasure; but did not constrain them or himself by altering in the smallest particular his usual habits of life. He rarely made his appearance amongst them, from breakfast until the hour of driving in the evening; as the time not spent in public business was given to his literary pursuits.

Dr. M’Alpin and he sat up until the extinction of the lights in the lower rooms round the square, and the glimmering of the night lamps in the upper chambers warned them that the world had retired to rest; a fact to which the “burning out,” of their own cocoa-nut oil wall-shades, and the loud

snoring of their bearers waiting in the outer rooms, bore testimony.

After breakfast next morning, the doctor's first care was to take the necessary steps for securing his passage; but after going in his palanquin all over Calcutta, to the Exchange, and the Cooly Bazaar, he had not been able to arrange any thing to his satisfaction.

The "Lady Juliana" had very fine accommodation, but Captain Seabreeze was generally supposed "to sail too near the wind,"—that is to say, kept a miserable table; so that the doctor, to whom good fare was not altogether indifferent, and who could not have contented himself with exactly the same cheer as when he came out, found it needless to inquire further. Though in his medical capacity he sometimes descanted upon the advantage of spare living, he was not over-fond of reducing the thing to practice, at least for four or five months upon a stretch. The doctor perfectly well knew the difference between prescribing and taking prescriptions,—not that we wish to insinuate

that our worthy friend was either a gourmand or an epicure; nor yet that happy compound of both, which men sometimes like even to affect, as a proof that they have lived where such things are to be learnt.

— The “ Carlisle Castle” was unexceptionable, but she was full. A lack and twenty thousand rupees in passage-money—the “ Patriot” was a fine ship, and had an excellent table, but Captain Ropesend was a tyrant, not only amongst his ship’s company, but his passengers; and no one would sail with him, but those who could not do better.

When the doctor represented all this to Mr. Curzon in the evening, as they were walking in the veranda, until the phaeton for their evening drive was brought to the door, Mr. Curzon told him that he expected a captain of an Indiaman to dine with him that night, who could perhaps accommodate him, or at all events give him useful information.

“I dinna want to wait for the last ships of the season,” said the doctor; “if we

have foul weather off the Cape, or a long voyage, I should not be able to get to Scotland this winter, and that would not do for me, though I have written to my niece, who is my name daughter, to be at Fernbraes to meet me."

"I do not know when the 'Snowden' sails, but Captain Landless will be able to tell you. I wish, since you are to go, that you may go with him. A better seaman never trod the deck; he is not one of those who have two characters, one for sea, and another for shore. As you see him to-night, you will always find him if you sail with him. Have you any objection to go with me to Fort William," continued Mr. Curzon. "I wish to inquire about a youth who has brought me a letter of introduction, from England. Foolish boy, he ought to have delivered it himself. Afterwards I can show you some of the changes, which have taken place since we landed."

"With all my heart, I desire nothing better," said the doctor, who preceded his

friend down stairs. When they were both seated in the high phaeton, which Mr. Curzon liked because it carried them out of the dust, he called to his sirdar* bearer, to bring the letter which he had left open on his dressing-table, as there was neither card or address sent with it, and he wanted it for the name. They drove down "the Cowtse," which, as they were out half-an-hour before the usual time, was only occupied by a battalion of bhisties,† marching ten or twelve feet abreast, in the act of watering it from the necks of their bhisty-bags, formed of the skins of small bullocks, and slung over the right shoulder, in a way when filled out with water, very much to resemble the animal from which they were taken.

Our friends entered the fort by the Chowringhee gateway, and drove straight through it, past the European parade, and governor's house, usually occupied by the adjutant-general of the king's troops, to the south

* Sirdar—head bearer.

† Bhisty—water-carrier.

barracks, where Mr. Curzon knew he would most probably find the newly-arrived cadets. He asked the first sentry he met, for the quarters of "Cadet Morton Sahib," without receiving a satisfactory answer, but on making him comprehend that it was one of the "little new come gentlemen" he wanted, the sentry directed him to the further end of the barracks, saying, "all the little gentlemen are there."

Mr. Curzon threw the reins to one of his sices,* and with the doctor walked up stairs into a long passage which extends through the centre, from one end of the barracks to the other, having staircases and entrances at both ends. Into this passage all the apartments on both sides open, and Mr. Curzon seeing a young gentleman coming out of one of them, went forward to him, and begged to be directed to that occupied by Mr. Morton.

"Mr. Morton, sir!" said the youth in

* Sice—groom.

an accent of surprise. "You do not mean young Morton who came out with us?"

"The same, sir, I suppose," answered Mr. Curzon. "I seek Mr. Morton who left England with the June fleet."

"He was in that room," pointing across the passage, "but I am sorry to tell you sir," he went on after a little hesitation, "he died last night, and was buried this morning."

The doctor, who had not taken part in the conversation, now came anxiously forward.

"Impossible!" answered Mr. Curzon, "there must be some mistake, I had a letter of introduction brought by the Morton I mean, delivered this afternoon."

"I can explain that circumstance, sir, if you will walk into my room." He turned the lock which was in his hand, and both gentlemen entered with him. The youth placed two chairs, all his quarters afforded, but his guests were too painfully interested to occupy them.

“But the letter?” asked Mr. Curzon.

“After all was over this morning, at six o’clock, poor Morton’s desk was opened by the barrack-master, in the presence of the proper people; a number of sealed letters were found in it, which were sent according to the addresses, and I suppose sir, yours was one of the number.”

“Why was it not sent before? When did you arrive?” asked Mr. Curzon.

“We have been here a week this day,” returned the youth.

“How unfortunate that I did not sooner receive that letter. This untimely catastrophe might have been prevented,” said Mr. Curzon.

“You knew the young man, sir,” inquired the doctor, “what was his illness, and what brought it on?”

“The sun they said, sir; he had been ill the whole night before any of us knew, indeed I only discovered it the day before yesterday, when I went into his room by chance. There was but a bearer with him

in the night who could not speak a word of English, nor we of Hindostance. It was the middle of the day when I went to him, and found him very ill in bed and very hot, with the sun shining in upon him, which the doctor afterwards said was bad. He complained of thirst, and I gave him Madeira and water, as much as he could drink.

The two gentlemen who were eagerly listening to this recital, exchanged a glance, but it would have been cruel, because unavailing, in such circumstances, to have told the speaker of the mischief he had done—they let him proceed.

“ Though he was certainly very ill, I did not know that there was the least danger. I had never been with sick people, and I did not know that young men could die without being long ill first.”

“ Poor boy!” said Mr. Curzon.

“ Poor boy,” said the doctor, “ his life has been the sacrifice of inexperience and want of attention. But when did medical assistance come?”

“ That I cannot precisely say, sir. I staid with him until tiffin, and finding that he could not eat any thing, and had become extremely restless and uneasy, I was fortunate enough to meet with a man who spoke a little English, and directed me to the doctor’s quarters. When I got there I made out, as well as I could understand his people, that he had gone over the plain to the general hospital, and I went into his house and wrote a note, which I desired them to take to him as I was obliged to be in town on business at a precise hour, and I never thought that there was any thing more the matter with Morton than a little heat from being too much in the sun the day before. I was detained to dinner by the captain we came out with, and when I came back here at night I found the garrison surgeon, but he told me that there was no need for him to stay longer, that he could be of no use. I was greatly shocked and surprised, and I tried to persuade him to stay; but he said he had other business to do, and as he could do nothing

for him, there was no necessity for his staying to see a man die. I remained by poor Morton, who was quite delirious, until he breathed his last, and I do not think I ever suffered so much in my life before."

"I believe it, my young friend, I believe it," said Dr. M'Alpin. "I wish I had been with you four-and-twenty hours sooner, and it might have been spared."

"It is doubly distressing to me," said Mr. Curzon, "poor boy, he was recommended to my care by an old friend, and had the letter been delivered he would have been in my house, and this might not have happened—but why were the letters not sent?"

"To confess the truth, sir, we all acted foolishly in that respect. One of the cadets who came before us, told us that it would be of no use. He gave us a history of the receptions he had met with, and out of nineteen letters which he presented, he never had but one invitation to a great dinner, where hardly any one spoke a word to him, or took any more notice of him than if he had

not been present,—and we were foolish enough, sir, to be guided by his advice, and some of us tore our letters, and others resolved never to deliver them.”

“ And the cadet who gave you this advice,” inquired Mr. Curzon, “ may I ask what sort of education and manners he possesses ?”

“ To say the truth, sir, not much of either. He is rather a rough fellow, just from school.”

“ There it is,” answered Mr. Curzon. “ I thought there must be something in himself, since he met with general neglect. A youth such as you describe could not be a desirable addition to any family. Depend upon it, that when people in this country have reason to complain of hospitality, the fault is generally in themselves.”

“ Experience is a stern master, my young friend,” said Dr. M’Alpin, “ and I hope he has taught you not to set lightly by the care and trouble of your kind parents another time, and not to destroy, for the opinion of an ignorant youngster, what has cost them,

it may be, trouble to procure, and what they laid stress upon as being of service to you when you were out of their sight."

The boy blushed, and the doctor continued kindly, "I did not mean to scold you young man, but take my advice," and he offered his hand, which the other took with cordiality, "and dinna reject acquaintance with those who have more years on their shoulders, and more experience to guide them."

"What has passed, shows me that we have done wrong," said the boy with manly frankness, which pleased both gentlemen, well knowing the difficulty those of his age usually have in confessing an error, and the pride they too often feel in rather standing by the consequences of their own free-will actions, than submitting to correct them by the opinion of those whom they too often suppose to have lost the fire of youth, and the pride of independence.

"It will give me pleasure, sir," said Mr. Curzon—"may I request your name?"

"Ouseley, sir—Charles Ouseley."

“It will give me pleasure, Mr. Ouseley, if you will make my house your home, while you remain at the presidency.”

“I am exceedingly obliged, sir, nothing could give me greater pleasure—but I do not know if I am permitted to be absent from the fort.”

“I shall settle all that for you. I’ll put you in the way of transacting the matter according to rule.—Have you any conveyance?”

“Yes, sir, I have a horse; the first thing I did was to buy a horse.”

“Then I shall leave one of my sices to conduct you to my house. Here is my card, you cannot miss your way. Do you know Tank Square? But stay—I had forgotten your baggage.”

He looked round the apartment which contained a small wicker-bottomed cot (without musquito curtains), furnished with a mattress and pillows, covered with a sheet and Madras palampore. A camp table of two leaves on folding stand, on

which was a uniform jacket, just come home from the tailor; scarlet cloth; gold epaulets; silk stockings, which seemed to have been rummaged out of their European packing cases; ink in a coffee-cup, wafers in a pill-box, pens and paper. Trunks placed upon each other, were made to perform the office of a dressing-table, by which stood a large brass chillumchee,* and black earthen goglet. Four chairs completed the furniture, one of which was occupied by a saddle, and the other by sundry pairs of boots and shoes, leaving only two disposable.

A regulation sword hung from one of the nooks for wall shades on the wall; a shot-bag and pistols occupied two more; and from the fourth depended a kind of flat fishing-basket, out of which projected a flute and some torn music. The floor was littered with the usual store of useless, nameless, indescribable trumpery, which is so often furnished to young gentlemen as indispensable, and which after costing a large

* Chillumchee—large basin.

sum to their parents, leaves them on their arrival in want of every serviceable article.

“Have you any trustworthy servant? but it is impossible you can have,” said Mr. Curzon, recollecting himself. “If you will put up those things,” looking at the mass upon the table, “I shall order proper people to be sent to carry them to my house.”

“I cannot think of giving you that trouble, sir; I have a very good useful servant who speaks English, and whom I can get to understand me—but here he is.”

A dirty, disorderly-looking kitmutgar,* while his master was speaking came into the room with his shoes on his feet; he, however, instantly returned and left them at the door, when he perceived that his master's guests were not “*new little Sahibs.*” He had on his head a soiled pink cotton turban, placed on one side; his thick coarse black hair hung from the crown of his head, and was cut straight across the back of his neck; his white cotton coat and trousers, were

* Kitmutgar—servant who waits at table.

both coarse and ragged, and his sash was of common coarse cloth, dyed orange. His large hooked-nose and thick bushy black eyebrows, gave his face altogether the appearance of roguery and assurance which characterizes the knavish and dissipated race of mussulmans, well known in Calcutta by the name of "king's officer's servants;" that is to say the entirely worthless part of the community, who take casual service with officers belonging to the ships and European regiments, resolved to make the most of their short time, and commonly ending by robbing their masters on the eve of departure.

"Call my servant," said Mr. Curzon to the kitmutgar.

"It is done, sahib," and he left the room.

"That fellow would never do," continued Mr. Curzon. "You would lose your baggage, Mr. Ouseley, if you trusted it out of your sight in his care."

"Your sircar furnished you with that scoundrel?" said the doctor.

“ Yes, sir; but I have never had any reason to complain of him.”

“ No ! though he came into the room where you were with his shoes on. If he had not quickly got rid of them, I should have pitched him out of that window for his insolence. Heard ever any body of a footman in our country coming into a room with a hat on his head, or a decent mussulman with his shoes on his feet ?”

“ It is not,” said Mr. Curzon, seeing that Mr. Ouseley did not understand, what could so highly have excited the doctor’s wrath, “ It is not the mere circumstance of a man’s coming into a room with his shoes on, that is the cause of offence, but the intention with which it is done. He knows perfectly well that he is putting upon you the greatest affront that a servant can offer to his master, and taking a liberty which he dare not with the lowest native. I mention this, because it is proper that Europeans should know what natives consider as respectful and disrespectful; they seldom fail in their

duties in that way when they see that we know what they ought to do; and, indeed, respectable servants never do so at any time."

" You will think I am giving you a hard lesson, Mr. Ouseley," joined the doctor; " but in this country, when you choose a new servant, always choose a clean and well-dressed man. Gambling and drunkenness are almost always the cause of dirt and rags. A proper man has too much self-respect ever to be seen without proper covering."

Mr. Curzon told his new acquaintance that he would expect him to dinner at half-past seven, in the mean time he promised to send one of his own chaprasseys* to see that the baggage was properly taken care of, and left him for the present.

* Chaprassey—running footman.

CHAPTER III.

Alas ! how changed the times to come !
Their royal name low in the dust !
Their hapless race wild wandering roam
Though rigid law, cries out 't was just !

WHEN Mr. Curzon and Dr. M'Alpin were reseated in the phaeton, the conversation naturally turned upon the lamentable event which had just come to their knowledge.

“It is much to be regretted,” said Mr. Curzon, “that parents at home generally know little of how their sons are situated when they come to this country. Here is another instance amongst the many I have met with, of these poor boys falling a sacrifice to their own inexperience; and the

climate gets the whole credit, when only half is due. Yet what can be done to prevent it? A man's fate must always be in a measure in his own hands, the anxiety of parents, or the providence of the legislature, cannot make provision against the thoughtlessness and presumption of their years. It is almost impossible to keep a great school-boy, wearied with having nothing to do, and often unprovided with any rational pursuit, within doors for a whole long day."

"Ay, ay," answered the doctor, "people at home often think that if a youth is idle and expensive, and will not settle to any business, he will do well enough for India. And if the truth were known, man or woman need to have industry that no longer will relax, and courage that no climate will subdue, to do any good here. Oh, if they would but consider what a young man is to do with himself, from five in the morning, his parade time, until six in the evening, when he may go out with safety, or how is he to pass over so many dull hot hours, in quarters by

himself, without getting into one folly or another, they would take more pains than they sometimes do to fit them for the scene they are to act in; and instead of sending those that have little education, they would at least strive to give every one some fixed pursuit. Health is compounded of many things, and amongst them the employment of the mind, Curzon, is not the least important."

"These ideas are too philosophic to be generally acted upon, in our expensive country; friends are glad to find a situation fit for a younger son, without too scrupulously considering whether he be fit for it. Every man sent to this country is provided for, the service is sure, he rises if he lives, and if he does not, he does not require it. It may be, that many letters are presented which are but of little use to the bearers; but when that is the case it may be traced with few exceptions, I fancy, to the way in which they are procured and the manners of the youth who delivers them. Friends and

parents at home, ask letters from those with whom they have little acquaintance, and send raw, uneducated schoolboys to present them, who in many cases cannot be pleasant guests in any house; so that, perhaps, the formal invitation to dine, which young Ouseley mentioned, or the general invitation to come at any time, which is only understood by those acquainted with the manners of the country, is all the fruit of it. The climate, the occupations of the day, languor of mind, the concomitant of both, and the driving-hour, being generally all that men in public life have for the enjoyment of family intercourse, prevent them taking the trouble of going to see how these poor boys get on in the Fort, and their situation is often deplorable when they are left to themselves."

"Yes," said the doctor, "and like this poor boy, they often make quick work of it. You will find fifty, ay a hundred deaths amongst the cadets, for one amongst the young ladies; and the reason is, that the last

are under the advice and direction of others, while the first are left to their own. They run about in the heat of the day, all over the place, drink Madeira and water, try their dogs and horses in the sun, and a thousand follies of the same kind. A man need have a constitution of iron to go through with it. There is many a dear bargain in this world, Curzon, but experience is the dearest of all. We most of us act first, and think how we ought to have done afterwards; and seldom, very seldom, any experience can serve us, but that which we have purchased for ourselves. We may give our heirs all that we possess in the world, but we can never give them our experience."

Mr. Curzon had staid so long in the Fort, that he had not time, even if he had inclination to show his friends the changes he had talked of. They were both too much accustomed to the striking events brought forward by a resistless climate, to feel that which had just passed, as they would have done years before; still it was of a nature

which made a solitary drive the most agreeable, and they took the Raussipuglah road, which brought a change of a different kind before them. Mr. Curzon pointed out to his friend several houses at no great distance from each other, some of them handsome, and others indifferent, the abodes of the Mysore princes.

“There,” he said, “dwell the family of Tippoo Sultan; they have been here ever since the capture of Seringapatam. At the time they came, there was an allowance assigned for the support of each, five thousand rupees a month I believe, which it has been the policy of the company not to increase, with their increasing families. There are now only two of Tippoo’s sons in life, but their descendants have multiplied to such a number, that they must soon either starve, or seek service in Calcutta. It is difficult to find employment for Mussulmans of their rank when the sword is forbidden.”

“The sins of the fathers have been visited upon the children here,” said the doctor.

If Hyder Ally usurped the throne of his benefactor, they have suffered for it root and branch; we might grieve for the overturn of a royal house, if we did not know, that some of these poor creatures are better here than if their family still filled the Musnud* of the Mysore. You know as well as I do, that in Mussulman courts the other brothers are almost always sacrificed to him who by his father's caprice, or his own boldness, is placed on the throne; and if their eyes are not put out, they are fed on opium until they take their departure more quietly. I know enough of those things."

"The Hindoo law of inheritance has certainly much the advantage over Mahomet's, and does not leave a whole family at the mercy of a jealous tyrant, who commonly adopts the maxim, that 'his throne stands most secure, when its feet are wet in blood.'"

"Ay, ay," returned the doctor, "cruelty and profligacy often go together. I have

* Musnud—throne.

remarked that when pleasure is the business of life, cruelty becomes its amusement. The mind sunk and exhausted by excess, can only be stimulated by sights of blood and suffering."

It had become almost dark before Mr. Curzon turned his horses' heads to retrace his steps; when they reached his own house, he found that his new acquaintance Mr. Ouseley and Captain Landless were in the drawing-room. After having introduced his friend Dr. M'Alpin to the latter, he good-naturedly entered into conversation with his young guest, who in the pride and pleasure of finding himself in his new uniform for the first time, had already forgotten whatever had distressed him. Notwithstanding the mobility of his temper, Mr. Curzon agreed in thought to what the doctor had already observed, that "there was making in him, when a few more years had gone over his head." He had not then completed his sixteenth year—an early age to be launched in the world, left to shape his own course,

amidst pitfalls as thick as those seen by Mirza, in his celebrated vision, at the entrance of the bridge of human life.

Mr. Curzon, in consequence of the untimely fate of the youth who had been recommended to his care, felt a double interest in one who seemed to be cast upon his protection; and after he had seriously advised him against needless exposure in the sun, and inconsiderate expense, he ended by saying, "Make yourself quite at home, here, Mr. Ouseley. You will always find breakfast on the table at seven, tiffin at one, and dinner at half-past seven, whether I am at home or not. My people will get you all the servants you require while you are here. If you wish to go out you have only to give the order, and my sirdar bearer, who is always in the house, will provide you with conveyance."

"I really do not know, sir, how to express my sense of all your goodness!"

"Well, do not try; but show it by taking care of yourself until you are sufficiently

acquainted with the country to know what you may, and what you may not do."

During this time, Dr. M'Alpin and Captain Landless had been walking in the veranda and settling their own affairs. Captain Landless was stout, not tall, with rather a short neck, ruddy cheerful countenance, and dark sharp eyes, shaded by thick black eyebrows. He spoke in a loud, decided, though not disagreeable tone of voice, which strengthened the general impression made by his manners that he was as prompt in action as resolute in time of danger. Dr. M'Alpin was prepossessed in his favour from the first moment of his introduction, and was actually disposed to be persuaded by Captain Landless to go home with him in the Snowdon, though he was to go "by the way of China."

"If a longer voyage does not make any material difference to you, sir, I would advise your going to China with me. I can give you elegant accommodation. You shall have the starboard side of the round house, and

as we sail directly, may probably be in England as soon as the ships which leave the sand-heads next month. With us you will have plenty of elbow-room, and be free from the noise of children, which, as you have none of your own, is perhaps not a pleasure to you."

"No, certainly;" answered the doctor, "give me elbow-room and quiet; but your table, captain—as you have no passengers—how stands that?"

"As my outward-bound voyage was for Bengal and China, I was full of passengers, and have abundance of stores and a good milk cow."

"That being the case, I do not see why I should not go with you, but here are the consumah's* joined hands, to say that dinner is on the table."

Before it was finished, Dr. M'Alpin had determined to take his passage in the Snowdon; and that important point settled, his first care in the morning was to push his

* Consumah—butler and house-steward.

preparations forward with all speed. At the end of a week he received a letter from Lucknow which gave him serious uneasiness; his friend Colonel Cheapstow had another attack of his old complaint, the liver, and bitterly regretted his absence from the station, and seemed to think himself not at all safe in the hands of his successor.

While the doctor was vexing himself over this letter, one of Mr. Curzon's chaprasseys came in to tell him that a musalgie* was very ill in the bottle caunah,† and that his master would be glad if he could do him any good.

The doctor went instantly to the poor creature, and found him suffering agonies from the rough treatment he had met with from a native practitioner, who had given his attendance while there was a rupee to be got, and now that he had fleeced his poor

* Musalgies—servants who clean the knives and forks, and run with lanterns before palanquins and carriages.

† Caunah—pantry; literally, a place to keep bottles.

patient to the last anna,* left him. His wrists, ankles, and temples, were strongly bound with cord, "to prevent the pulse from beating so fast," and his stomach miserably cauterized with a hot iron "to extract the heat."

Notwithstanding the state to which these remedies had reduced the sufferer, he gradually recovered under Dr. M'Alpin's care, who, as he said, often found that a little feeding did as much for the natives as medicine, particularly after they had been for several days submitted to the Sangrado system of hot water for their only nourishment, of which their own empirics are so fond.

"These fevers are the daily fruit of the grog-shops," said Mr. Curzon, when the doctor recounted to him all that had passed. "The reformers of public morals have need to look to the grog-shops; they are a nuisance of our introduction. The owners pay a rupee a day for permission to sell

* Anna—small coin, sixteenth part of a rupee.

spirits, and if they go on to license them in Calcutta, as has lately been done, we shall not have a respectable servant in our houses. Nothing corrupts our mussulman attendants like those haunts of gambling, and schools of theft. A man can procure drink for any article which he chooses to take from his master's house. We undo with one hand what we do with the other—what signify our schools if we suffer any collector to increase the revenue by such detestable means. I remember the time when there was no such thing. You will find now all round Calcutta, that wherever a gentleman's house is situated, a grog-shop starts up beyond his garden-wall to debauch his servants ; and when you consider that a man can completely intoxicate himself for twopence, or perhaps half of it, it is easy to imagine what the trade must be, which enables these wretches to pay a rupee a day for their licence. I am angry with them, for they have lost me as good a servant as I ever had in my house. A young lad who had grown up with me.

I saw him change under my own eye, every day becoming drier and blacker. From being stout, well-dressed, respectful, and attentive, he grew dirty and negligent. I did not discover the cause, until it was too late to save him; he fell a victim to opium and toddy. But I had almost forgotten to ask you, if you will cross the river with me this afternoon. I have a little business with Ascot, whom I think you knew up the country."

"Yes, I remember him very well," said the doctor; "we may as well cross over to his place, as go any where else. He is married, I believe, since I saw him, and I heard his lot is not the most fortunate."

"I believe there may be something of that kind," answered Mr. Curzon; "though I really do not know. I have never seen him since I left the upper provinces. He married, I think, a country-born Dutchwoman, who, I believe, does not speak much English, and, in consequence, has fallen out of European society. They have just come

down the country, so I do not know very much about them. We may as well take young Ouseley with us."

CHAPTER IV.

Now Bell my wife, she loe's no strife,
But she would guide me e'en she can,
So to maintain an easy life,
I oft maun yield, tho' I'm gude man !

OLD SONG.

AT the usual hour in the evening the three gentlemen proceeded together in their palanquins to the Old Fort Ghaut, as had been previously determined, where their boat was in readiness. "Well, well," said the doctor, looking at the new buildings within the old walls, as he stood waiting for the dandies* to place a plank from the steps to the boat; "the ship-people will doubtless

* Dandies—boatmen.

think our new customhouse a great improvement, though the antiquarians may regret the demolition of the 'Old Fort' and the 'Black Hole;' ours is the age of reason, when nothing is sacrificed to memory."

"I thought with you, my friend," answered Mr. Curzon, "when I saw the work of destruction going on; it was, perhaps, as laborious as the original construction had been; the ramparts were of immense thickness, and so consolidated by time, that to remove them seemed like quarrying the solid rock. That memorial of our suffering is gone from the earth with the pillar which recorded it; and I must always regret the destruction of an historic monument."

The palanquins were left in waiting on the opposite bank, and as the house to which they were going stood close to the river, they ordered the boatmen to land them at Mr. Ascot's Ghaut, and walked up under the shade of the bearers chattahs.* The first view of the mansion gave them a

* Chattah—large umbrella.

perfect idea of its inhabitants. It was large and would have been handsome, had it not been quite surrounded and disfigured by a deep chopper* veranda, closed into different divisions by green cheeks,† purdahs,‡ and matting, giving it altogether a patched and ragged appearance. When they drew near they were warned what sort of inmates tenanted these compartments, by the chattering of monkeys, screaming of paroquets, boobies, minahs, &c. “Quite a native establishment,” said Mr. Curzon.

“Hoot,” said the doctor, “what could tempt Ascot to such a step as this !”

“Money—and if he has got it, dearly has he gained it. The father-in-law had an immense fortune, and Ascot an equally great talent for spending.”

By this time they had reached the front veranda; the bearer drew up a cheek to admit them, and they were ushered into a

* Chopper—thatched veranda.

† Cheeks—large blinds constructed of small reeds.

‡ Purdahs—screens.

very large hall, which extended through the centre of the house. The doors and windows were all shut round and round, and the outworks with which it was externally garished, rendered the apartment so dark, that the visitors stood for a moment looking about before they discovered Mr. Ascot moving in the gloom to welcome them.

He took the tone of an old friend, perhaps charmed to see any one he had ever seen before come to him in his solitude. "Ah! Curzon, how do you do, and my friend from Lucknow too, I did not look to see you here." He bowed to the stranger whom Mr. Curzon presented.

"Mrs. Ascot," he called as if speaking to some one in the room, though there was no body visible—"Come here, I wish to introduce you to my friends."

No answer was returned, but they heard a sort of shuffling on the mat.

The guests had now begun to recover the use of their vision, which, dazzled by the external light, had left them upon coming

into this gloomy abode, and they could distinguish, amidst other objects, a large folding screen at the further end of the apartment, from which proceeded a scratching noise as Mr. Ascot called upon his wife; but no lady appeared.

“ My wife is no great walker,” he said, speaking to his visitors, “ but I am sure she is here, and if she will not come to us, we must go to her.”

He led the way, and sure enough in the intricacies of the screen the lady was discovered seated in a large wicker chair, in the midst of four slave girls who squatted on the floor, were at work around her. The noise proceeded from the scratching together their baskets and bundles, and as soon as the visitors appeared they rose and decamped. These poor creatures are sometimes bought by country-born families, of wandering Arabs, who, contrary to British law, hawk about unfortunate children for sale. Foreigners also, who usually prefer economy to propriety in their domestic establishments, choose slaves

in preference to native servants, as they have no caste, and are in fact servants of all work, kept at the slight expense of poor food and coarse clothing. Mrs. Ascot had hers instructed in needlework by her durzee,* and as she never did any thing in that way herself, she had the more leisure to keep them busily employed.

Mrs. Ascot seeing strangers, rose, and without courtesying bent her head, which she repeated again and again as her husband introduced her visitors, much in the manner of the Chinese porcelain figures, which continue to wave their heads backwards and forwards when they are once set in motion. This ceremony gave the guests time to remark the figure before them, which was exceedingly fat, and very dark. Her garb was a white muslin robe, made like a very large chemise, tied full round the neck, and again confined by a yellow ribbon round a waist of the largest size; short tight sleeves, which left the whole of the fat black arms, without

* Durzee—tailor.

gloves, in view. Her face was a regular oval in form, and on the whole, rather handsome. She wore her hair divided in the centre, and braided back smooth behind her ears. Whimsically placed on the top of her head was a silk cap, something between flesh and salmon colour, stuck full of silver flowers. On her feet blue silk shoes, with toes sharp as needles, showing that she drew her ornamental apparel rather from her store trunks than any modern repository. She carried a Chinese painted fan in her hand, which she waved in accordance with every movement of her head.

“ I never sits in that large hall, because take cold without screen,” said Mrs. Ascot to Mr. Curzon as an apology for not coming when she was called.

“ Yes,” joined her husband, “ she sits so constantly in her own rooms with those slave-girls, that she thinks a breath of air is to kill her.”

“ You loves so much airs, and so much lights, and so many noise, that my poor eyes

ache, and my head ache, and I altogether ache."

"If the screaming of birds and beasts, and the infernal chattering of slave-girls and monkeys can give headaches, no one need want them in this house."

"You hear for him, Mr. Curzon, how he make scold to me, and all for my poor dumb brutes."

Both their visitors had seen and heard scenes of this kind before, therefore did not waste their sympathy upon those who seemed equally insensible of the misery or ridicule of their own situation. Mr. Ouseley, to whom the whole was perfectly new, gazed with wonder alternately upon the interlocutors, and the friends with whom he came.

"If all my torments deserved the title of dumb brutes," said Mr. Ascot, politely,—“I would have more peace in my own house. You will think mine an odd complaint, doctor—I never have company or quiet—but to state the case—my wife rises at five in the morning, but she is not out of her room till

twelve, and I have my solitary breakfast at eight, while she is in her room airing bird of paradise plumes and kincobs, and artificial flowers, and a thousand other things, of which she never makes any use, enough to set up a shop in the China bazar, and screaming with those slaves louder than the loories in the veranda."

"Things I not make any use," answered his lady reproachfully—"when you want some cloths—when children want—I go to large chest, take out—not like other ladies send to bazar—buy—buy—I take good bargain, and keep all to ready."

"Yes, for the sake of a rupee on a piece of cloth, you make me carry them all over the country, and make me pay ten times as much as they are worth. Was I not obliged to buy six more camels to carry your trumpery down here?"

"You hear to him, Mr. Curzon—a company's servant speak like a little Admy.*

* Admy—being literally, a descendant of Adam.

All great ladies plenty things get, and why not me?"

"Surely, Ascot," said Mr. Curzon, not knowing what else to say to satisfy the appellant, "you cannot expect to travel so lightly now as when you were a bachelor."

"No, certainly, with a wife, eight children, four slaves, five ayahs,* more birds and beasts than were ever in the ark, with their boxes and cages, to say nothing of bandboxes, patarrahs,† and lackered trunks, and camphor trunks, and all sorts of trunks. My wife never eats any but turkeys' eggs at breakfast, and we have coops for them to lay in fastened on the back of the camels—you may say I do not travel light!"

"But though you have eight children," said Mr. Curzon, going back to the first articles in the list of heavy baggage, "they are not all here with you, you have sent the eldest home long ago."

* Ayahs—waiting-women.

† Patarrahs—covered baskets.

“And what you call home?” inquired Mrs. Ascot. “This home for me, I not part with my children, not never.”

“Persuade her to that if you can,” answered her husband, “I have tried to do it until I am weary; she falls into fits whenever I propose it, though the creatures are growing up wild—Louisa is eleven years old, and can neither read nor write.”

“And what signify? you know I not read—write, and you many time tell to my papa, before you make marriage to me, I much better than Europe’s ladies, spends all time to read—write.”

Something like a blush passed over her husband’s face at this avowal. Young Ouseley could hardly smother his inclination to laughter, nor the doctor suppress his desire to tell Mr. Ascot what he thought of his whole conduct.

“You have more to do, I dare say, Mrs. Ascot, than to have time for such things,” answered Mr. Curzon, willing to make an effort in a way likely to affect his hearer,

for the little sufferers, “but your children—children of their rank are always sent to England, and your boys cannot come into the service unless they have been brought up in England.”

“Very well, Mr. Ascot, send boys he please, but I keep girls to me.—Rain come! rain come! Ascot, make for bearers shut down purdahs all round! my poor loories! my jacks!”

Mrs. Ascot got up as fast as she could waddle, and followed her husband, whom she sent off first as a light courier to collect the servants for the protection of the chattering multitude without, who screamed and clamoured together, as the wind overturned them and their dwellings.

“How unlucky this is!” said Mr. Curzon, as soon as Mr. and Mrs. Ascot were out of hearing, “here we shall be detained for another hour at least, it is impossible to cross the river in such weather.”

“I would rather be wet to the skin, than in the hearing of such outrageous folly,”

answered the doctor, "in a place without air or light—but I will let in both, come of it what will." He opened the northern doors, and in an instant effected his purpose, the north-wester circulating a new atmosphere.

While he was standing at the door to enjoy it, a child's carriage of very large dimensions, drawn by two immense red Guzerat bullocks (with large black humps and tails), trotted up to the door, and six of the beforementioned eight children (with two or three ayahs), got out of it, and rushed into the hall, followed by two well-grown boys, who had dismounted from their ponies at the same time.

The single article of dress worn by the girls was exactly in form and shape like their mother's nondescript robe, with the exception of its only having one fastening, at the neck, from which it flowed loose. Their dingy feet without stockings were thrust into red, yellow, and green slippers of "Chinamans'" manufacture. The boys also had a single article of clothing, which con-

sisted of trousers and body in one piece, without sleeves.

When they had reconnoitred the strangers, and made a great many remarks on them in Hindostanee (though no entreaty of either Mr. Curzon or Dr. M'Alpin, could induce them to advance, or answer the questions which they were asked), they set upon Mr. Ouseley, whom they called "the little sahib," and very soon possessed themselves of his sword and sash. In the midst of the uproar their father returned, and laughed immoderately at seeing his eldest boy buckle the sword-belt round his waist, and drag the sword after him along the floor, while one of his sisters equipped in the sash, marched by his side. It was in vain that Mr. Ouseley attempted to speak to them, they did not understand one word of English.

"You will stay dinner with us?" said Mr. Ascot.

Mr. Curzon made an excuse. "We have a positive engagement."

"It is impossible to keep it—you cannot

cross in such weather. It is now late and dinner is just coming on the table."

Mr. Curzon, in pity to the family whom he saw growing up perfect natives, took the opportunity of their mother's absence to urge the necessity of sending them to Europe.

Mr. Ascot pleaded the impossibility of obtaining her consent.

"If that is the case, do not ask it; take their passage, and when the deed is done, necessity will reconcile her. You are sacrificing their wellbeing, body and mind, in every sense of the word, by keeping them here."

Mr. Ascot promised; whether he would hold that promise was another affair. He was a good-natured, indolent, unthinking man, whose first effort was to please a person whom it was impossible to please, and whose caprices and exactions only multiplied by indulgence, and whose yoke he would have thrown off, unless indolence had prevented him. He therefore took the mid-

dle course and grumbled and obeyed, always complaining of the thralldom which he had not energy or perseverance to break.

They heard the twang of a Javanese harp, and the beating of a tomtom* from Mrs. Ascot's side of the house.

"There she is," said her husband, "enjoying all the amusement she ever has any pleasure in, with the exception of the puppet-shows she often gets for the children, and delights in as much as they do. Those slaves make music enough to scare me out of the house, but their mistress has no greater enjoyment when she is resting on her couch (for she never goes out), than to hear them, unless it may be to listen to the stories they tell."

The doctor watched the weather, but there seemed no prospect of the rain abating. "Saw ye ever the like of this?" he said to Ouseley, who had joined him in the veranda. "Here is a specimen of what a man

* Tomtom—drum.

may bring himself to, that I dare say ye little dreamed of."

"Never saw any thing like it before; but why does the man suffer it?"

"Because he cannot help it. What could alter that woman? She has brought him an immense fortune, and has a right to dispose of some of it according to her own taste. Her father, as she told us, never taught her to read or write, so that in mind she is just on a par with her slaves, in whose company she seems so much to delight. I have seen in my life many a modification of her character, though not just so bad, because she seems, in addition to her want of education, naturally stupid; and though education does do a good deal, nature must have her part."

The servants had, by this time, lighted the lamps; the rain still fell in torrents, and the weather-bound visiters saw no alternative from the discomfort of the offered dinner. The consumah entered at one door to an-

nounce it, and Mrs. Ascot at another. Mr. Curzon gave his hand to the lady of the mansion, and conducted her to table exactly in the same costume as he had first the honour to see her, with the addition, however, of two rows of splendid pearls round her neck, diamond earrings in her ears, a variety of bracelets on her wrists, and rings on her fingers.

The children who had followed their mother from her apartment, advanced before the company into the dining-room, making a critical survey of every dish upon the table. One of them carried a silver hand-basin, into which one of the little boys poured the contents of a large rose-water bottle, chased in beautiful gold filigree-work.

“ Oh, you rogue ! my rosewater for spoil,” cried his mother, not displeased that her guests should have an opportunity of seeing some of her fine possessions.

The boy paid no attention to her admo-

nitions in English or Hindostanee, but saying he was a bhisty continued to sprinkle the rose-water all round the room.

“ Louisa, Louisa !” she called to the eldest girl; “ you make stop your brother !”—The young lady was otherwise engaged, and took no notice of the direction.

At length, when they were seated at table, Mr. Curzon prepared to carve the roast turkey, to which Mrs. Ascot desired to be helped, as she said, “ she not any soup eat but mullagatanee;” but before he could put his fork into the bird, Miss Louisa, who had been hovering about, and watching her opportunity, seized it by the neck, and, as she said, made it jump over Mr. Curzon’s arm, to the infinite delight of her brothers and sisters.

Their reasonable mother threw herself back in her chair in a convulsion of laughter, and Mr. Ouseley, encouraged by her example, gave vent to the like inclination, which he had been almost dying to indulge ever since he entered the house.

“The most extraordinary thing I ever saw in my life !” said the doctor.

“Your young lady has an active spirit, Ascot; she has not lost in that way by remaining so long in the country,” said Mr. Curzon.

Mr. Ascot at first broke out in a tone of indignation, but seeing his son and heir making faces over Mr. Curzon’s shoulder, his short-lived anger died away in a burst of laughter.

The servants in waiting clapped their hands on their mouths to prevent an untimely explosion of their merriment, and knocked their heads together in their hurry to escape out into the veranda, where they could indulge it without offence; even the old bearer, pulling the punkah, was obliged to let the rope out of his hand with a jerk as he followed the infectious example.

The children, no doubt, greatly edified by the general mirth which they had excited, as soon as it was a little appeased, retired

in whispering consultation to plan another attack.

“I beg your pardon, Curzon,” said Mr. Ascot; “I am really sorry, M’Alpin, that the bird you intended to be helped to should have flown away; but when I saw the faces that fellow was making, it was impossible for me to be angry; after all, it was but a funny trick, though we are the sufferers. Let me recommend this pillaw to you—we are famous for Hindostanee dishes in this house.”

“My Louisa so droll girl—you laugh all day, Mr. Curzon, you see her tricks,” said Mrs. Ascot, as the tears ran down her cheeks from the exertions she had just been making.

Mr. Ouseley’s unfeigned participation with her, had recommended him very much to Mrs. Ascot’s notice, and she turned to ask him what her funny children had done with his sword and sash.

“Taken them to play with, madam, I suppose.”

“ Oh, not sword ! not sword ! I so fear for sword ! ” and looking round the dreaded weapon was discovered lying harmless on a side table where the little pickle had thrown it, to leave him in liberty for the intended felony ; “ Oh, there I see them,” cried the provident mother—she gave the order in Hindostance to a servant, “ Take away Ouseley Sahib’s sword and hide it, until the children are gone to bed.”

The order was no sooner executed, and the sword and sash had been made over to Mr. Curzon’s chaprassee, who deposited them with the palanquins, which he had sent a boatman to get for his master and his guests, than the unruly troop returned to the dining-room in quest of the missing articles. Perceiving that they were not to be found, they made a second attack upon the owner. Had he understood Master William’s reiterated questions, “ Where is your sword ? ” “ Where have you put your sword ? ” he could not have given a satisfactory answer, as their removal had passed between Mrs.

Ascot and her servants. The boy then asked his father, his mother, and all the servants in turn, from whom he received the same answer—"I don't know, who knows? Perhaps some jackal has run away with it."

Fatigued with finding his efforts ineffectual, he returned to Mr. Ouseley with no better success than at first—exasperated by such unusual contradiction to his wishes, the well-bred young heir walked round to the opposite side of the table, and slyly putting his hand into a dish full of gravy, he seized one half of a dressed lamb's head, and threw it with such force at Mr. Ouseley, that it hit him a blow on the breast, and covered his new uniform-jacket with gravy. Exulting in the mischief he had committed and the revenge he had taken, he fled with all speed.

Poor Mr. Ouseley coloured redder than his coat, but he suppressed his anger, and bowing to Mrs. Ascot, he begged she would excuse his rising from table, while he called the assistance of the servants in the hall.

Mr. Ascot who felt that this was too clumsy a joke, burst forth in violent anger.

"This is all your doing, Mrs. Ascot—this is your education—this is your bringing up of my children. That boy is worse than your Jacko—all your favourites become equally insupportable!"

"Who make noise now, Mr. Ascot? and all for poor senseless child's play. What he know of spoil coat? if coat spoil I scarlet cloth got, new coat can make for Ouseley Sahib."

This proposal was too much for the doctor—he could not help laughing in the midst of his wrath. Fortunately the youth for whose benefit it was made was out of hearing.

"You are enough to drive a man mad," said her husband, half rising from his chair, and sitting down again in the same instant; "but it is my fault and not yours, else you would not have the power to expose yourself and me in this manner. I do not know

what apology to make to you for the occurrences of this evening," he continued, addressing his visitors; "but you see the misery I have heaped upon my own head, and I hope will excuse them."

"Transport the culprits—send them to England," said the doctor, "and think no more about it. As Ouseley is beginning his military life he must expect harder knocks yet."

The lady, who had not the slightest idea that any thing had taken place out of the common rules of society wished to explain to Mr. Curzon all about the scarlet cloth, of which she had talked.

He saw that with her ideas upon "chutta sahibs," little gentlemen, and "burrow sahibs," great gentlemen, it would be utterly impossible to make her comprehend reason upon the subject, and he had no alternative but to tell her, that Ouseley was the son of a burrow sahib, and the coat was of no consequence.

Satisfied upon this point, all the rest ap-

peared to her of not the least importance, and she was quite assured that her guests would find the spirit of her children as entertaining as she did.

The doctor when he saw that Mr. Ascot actually suffered from the effects of his own folly, let pity overcome his anger, and talked with him on other subjects, for the time which civility obliged them to remain together.

As soon as it was possible after dinner, Mr. Curzon called for the palanquins, and took his departure; not, however, before Mrs. Ascot with many bends of the head, “hoped he would soon return to spend such another agreeable day;” and finding that the doctor had succeeded in smoothing down her ruffled husband, she extended the same invitation to him, judiciously observing,

“Another time you come, teach me, doctor, how make Mr. Ascot well when he is muggra,* and I not have no more lambs’ heads when Mr. Ouseley come.”

* Muggra—sulky.

“Incorrigible fool!” muttered her husband, as he walked into the veranda, calling for musalgies and lanterns.

Both the gentlemen, on parting with him, repeated their advice not to lose time in sending home his children.

When they were seated before their boat, Mr. Curzon said to his young friend, “I would have regretted having brought you here to-night and subjecting you to such impertinence, if I did not think it might be a serviceable lesson to you in your progress through life. I knew the man whose house we have just left, a gentlemanly, good kind of fellow, but idle and expensive. The consequence is what you see—he married that animal for her father’s money—she has been the means of driving European society from his house; and instead of raising her, he has sunk to her level. In this country, where the climate disposes to indolence, the most deteriorating principle of our nature, which, like a cankerworm, eats to the root of every excellence in human character, a man had

need to seek all helps and appliances to boot to raise himself and to stimulate energy, rather than suffer himself, as poor Ascot has done, to fall into the dust."

"If I thought I could save those young creatures," said the doctor, "though I doubt with some of them it is too late, I would even bear the folly and vulgarity of that intolerable woman, and come back another day to see if Ascot has really kept his promise. What preserves *our* superiority of character and feeling in India, but that we are all brought up Britons? It is our proud boast, that wherever our children are born, we send them home to be educated; we give them the sentiments, and the pride, and the independence of our natural character. Whereas in all the Dutch, French, Portuguese, and other foreign settlements, they keep their children with them, and in two generations they are natives in their minds, if not in colour. We make healthy, vigorous settlements in India, carrying along with us the refinement, knowledge, and im-

provements of our mother-country; they establish colonies and dwindle into natives. You may well laugh at the idea, Ouseley, but when we took Java from the Dutch, our officers gave a ball at which the Dutch ladies appeared adorned in splendid jewels, without stockings; and a slave-girl stood behind the chair of each in the ball-room, for fear that their diamonds should be stolen out of their hair."

"A friend of mine," said Mr. Curzon, "who was present at the aforesaid ball, and who likes a joke, told me that perceiving three of the ancient circular mammas (who were quite weary of the unsubstantial entertainment of seeing their daughters dance) leave the ball-room and make their way into the supper-room to see what hope there was for them there, followed, and calling for a bottle of brandy, helped them to a glass each, by which they were so much refreshed as to be able to wait in patience for the next act."

"And at an entertainment of the same

kind in the Isle of France, after we took it from the French," rejoined the doctor, "the ladies emptied the contents of the dishes after supper into their pocket-handkerchiefs, and carried them home in their pockets because—they liked bonbons—I mention that to you, Ouseley, as a proof of what a colony becomes. Do not fancy, though, that every woman who has the misfortune to be brought up in India is exactly upon a par with the specimen we had to-day; it must be confessed that she is something beyond the common rule. *We* keep up our intercourse with home by as regular an interchange of persons and things as is carried on by the coaches to and from the metropolis of Britain to the outskirts of the kingdom. There's not a book printed in *our* country that we have not here five months after it comes from the press; whereas amongst foreigners they know no more of what is doing in France or Holland, than the inhabitants of the South Seas; unless it may be when a new [functionary arrives

amongst them once in ten years,—to open their mouths in gaping wonder at the great things that have come to pass since they were last there.”

CHAPTER V.

Few moments are more pleasing than those in which the mind is concerting measures for a new undertaking.

JOHNSON.

THE doctor's preparations for his voyage were now almost completed; his sea furniture was made, his trunks nearly packed, and the shawls and presents he intended for his friends at home, carefully soldered down in their tin boxes. He was seated in the midst of them, surrounded by bearers in the act of packing; his hookah in his hand, from which he drew long whiffs as he poised his chair on the back legs, his own set out on a high morah,* a large table before him

* Morah—footstool.

covered with bills, accounts current, Europe letters, &c., amongst which his sircar was rummaging for something which he at length drew out and began to read: "One list of master's necessities for Europe ship, and Sangar passage-boat.—All things for eat and drink master must take for passage-boat?" inquired the sircar.

An affirmative nod of the head desired him to go on.

"And how many servants master want for boat? Consumah—kitmutgar—bowberjee*—his mate—musalgie—bhisty—bearers?"

"Only the sirdar and his mate."

"Very well, sahib, I pay to rest, and let go—dobee†—istrie-wallah, ‡ master not want—horses not want to boat, I think?"

"No, certainly."

"Hookahbardar§ must go to Sangar, master can't do without," he made a mark opposite to the man's name; "all other ser-

* Bowberjee—cook. † Dobee—washerman.

‡ Istrie-wallah—Iron-man.

§ Hookahbardar—man who dresses the hookah.

vants I think master pay up, and leave to Lucknow ?”

Another affirmative nod.

The sircar prided himself not a little on his perfect knowledge of English, which he always said, “he could speak, write, like any sahib,” and he stood with his ink-horn hanging from his sash, and his reed-pen sticking behind his ear, from under his turban.

“Then master please, I read to list for ship,” he said.

“One milk goat, will soon give kittens.

“To one jar of sable fishes for Kedgerree, to master’s breakfast.

“To five hundred of pickled mangoe’s fish rocs.

“To six dozen of long gentleman’s stockings.

“To Hoff’s and Co.’s, humps pickled.

“To one dozen of short gentleman’s gloves.

“To making eight dozen fine-ruffled gentleman’s shirts.

“ ‘To making eight dozen gulla-bands* for dit—dit—dit.

“ ‘To goose’s puppies smoked.’ ”

The Durwan’s† bell rung, the gate opened, a carriage entered and rolled under the portico. Two chaprasseys with silver sticks were upon the back of it; the well-known crimson and gold liveries, attracted the notice of the doctor’s servants. “Our Colonel Sahib! Chipto Sahib!” screamed the whole party in concert, fluttering to the door, and salaaming to the floor before Colonel Cheapstow as he entered.

The doctor threw down his hookah, and rose to greet his friend. After mutual inquiries had passed, Colonel Cheapstow said, “You had no sooner left us at Lucknow, doctor, than I had such a smart attack of the enemy here,” pressing his hand on his right side, “that Mrs. Cheapstow advised me not to lose an hour in taking my departure for Europe. You know we had in-

* Gulla—throat. Gulla-bands—neckcloths.

† Durwan—porter.

tended to have done so next year; our preparations were in part made. I pressed the rest, and we arrived in Calcutta with the ebb-tide."

"To take such accommodations as I can give you I hope," said Mr. Curzon, who caught the last sentence as he entered the room.

"With pleasure, Curzon, nothing can give me more pleasure than to spend the little time I have to be in India, under your roof. I have left Mrs. Cheapstow on board our boat, where she wishes to stay until the cool of the evening. At sunset I shall have the satisfaction of introducing her to you. I think we have not met since I became benedict."

"It is even so, Cheapstow; you may depend upon my doing all in my power to make your stay in Calcutta agreeable to your lady."

Satisfied from Colonel Cheapstow that he had benefited by the air of the river, Mr. Curzon left his friends, as business called

him, telling the doctor to take care of the colonel, and saying to her husband that he hoped for the honour of Mrs. Cheapstow's company at dinner.

"I see you are far advanced," said Colonel Cheapstow, looking at the figure of the doctor's cabin, which was in exact form and dimensions chalked upon the floor, and in which was placed his sea furniture made to his own orders, every article precisely to fit the space for which it was intended.

"Yes, I think I shall not be ill off—walk into my cabin, colonel; here is my couch, and here is my post just by it, and here are my stern windows. Ye see I am well aired and well lighted."

"I wish we could go with you—what ship do you sail in?"

"The Snowdon—and if it is possible for you to be ready, it's a thing worth thinking about. By good luck the captain is to call this morning; at this very hour," taking out his watch. "And you can settle with

him about accommodation, without loss of time."

Captain Landless kept his appointment, and Colonel Cheapstow's wish to be under the care of his trusty friend Dr. M'Alpin, triumphed over all minor considerations, even the destination to China—and the business was soon settled to the satisfaction of both parties. He agreed to give ten thousand rupees for the other half of the round-house next the doctor's, and a small cabin for the colonel's dressing-room.

"We have abundance of Patna sheep, and Chittagong fowls on board, fine pigs, ducks, geese, turkeys, and guinea-fowls; so that," said Captain Landless, "though we are not a large party, we shall not want for any thing."

"Excuse my sending some things on board, captain. I am an invalid," answered Colonel Cheapstow.

"Certainly, sir, you can send whatever you choose, but permit me to say, that it is useless your taking the trouble. You will

find that we are provided with every thing you can possibly want."

Captain Landless took leave, promising to send his carpenter to take Colonel Cheapstow's orders about the fixtures he might want on board.

The colonel inspected the doctor's cabin again, as his own was its counterpart,—and when the carpenter came gave orders to have it covered with Persian carpeting, which he would send from his boat, to have lamps hung, and additional mirrors put up.

Dr. M'Alpin knew his friend's foible, and took no notice of those orders, though the carpenter bluntly observed, "that the round-house of the Snowdon, was as handsome as ever a ship in the company's service, and that nailed down carpets would be no great improvement if they should happen to poop a green sea off the Cape.

"My hookah, doctor—what am I to do about my hookah?" inquired the colonel ;

“do you take yours? you cannot do without, nor can I neither.”

“I take it certainly, because I shall want it at Fernbraes, and Cussim Ali has learned to dress it as well as any hookahbardar in Hindostan, but I will not use it on board, knowing that to be dangerous and against orders. I will have my callean* tho’.”

“I shall follow your example, and do the same thing, for I should be miserable without the one or the other.”

The morning ran on in these preparations, and at the usual hour the two gentlemen tiffed with Mr. Ouseley ; Mr. Curzon did not again make his appearance. When the sun began to decline Colonel Cheapstow set forth through the Chitpore bazar, with his silver sticks on the back of his carriage as before. His sices brandished their silver handled chowries† and screamed to the mob as they passed to clear the way,—

* Callean—a small portable hookah.

† Chowries—white cow tails to drive away flies.

orders, however, which were much less likely to be attended to in the crowded bazar of Calcutta, than in the neighbourhood of the residency, and they were stopped in the quarter of the bazar occupied by the professors of Tubal Cain's craft amidst piles of brazen pots and pans, for full five minutes, a thing which the chaprasseys declared had never happened to their master in the whole course of his life.

They made their way, however, through the silk-dyers, artificial flower-makers, cotton-carders, and manufacturers of Hindoostanee sweatmeats, until they reached the Ghaut, where they stopped amidst a crowd of the colonel's servants busily occupied in landing his things. After giving his orders to the head servants of the different departments, he went on board to inform his wife of all he had done in town.

Mrs. Cheapstow was a sensible and excellent woman, though somewhat eccentric, and disposed to speak her mind very freely. She was several years younger than her

husband, and though sincerely attached to him, still liked a little of her own way, and was apt to think that she knew fully as much of the ordinary affairs of life as the colonel. He, amidst many good qualities, had two little foibles, which were sometimes teasing, as they were in exact opposition to the feelings of his wife—his high sense of his own dignity, and his love of good eating. Her frank and open nature was above all the little ostentations, which long residence at a pompous and luxurious court had in a manner rendered second nature to her husband, and she hated the epicurianism to which she traced the severe fits of illness by which he had been lately attacked.

After he had given a full detail of all the particulars, he went on,

“It is an unusual thing, my dear, our going home by the way of China, but the *Snowdon* is a magnificent ship, and I can never be so well any where as under M’Alpin’s care. People might think,” he continued, with an air of importance, “such a

step strange upon my part, unless my reasons were known."

"If it suits us it is enough," answered his wife; "people will never trouble themselves about it."

"You mistake, Mrs. Cheapstow, the departure of a man of my standing is of some consequence."

"Yes; certainly to those who are to succeed us in the appointment. Do you know, I heard, at Berhampore, that there are four-and-twenty applications already gone in to his lordship for it."

"I have almost a mind to withdraw my application for leave, and go back to punish such indecorous haste," said the colonel, turning his back, and walking off in a contrary direction.

"We shall be the parties punished, my dear, if Dr. M'Alpin sails before us. If you stay to die here, you will have all these people visiting you in great anxiety to see how you get on, or rather when you are

likely to go off, that they may come in after you."

"They shall do nothing of the kind," answered the colonel, returning. "But how is it possible that we should have any thing in proper condition on board that vessel in such a short time?"

"Oh, we shall just do as others do in that respect."

"It is strange, Mrs. Cheapstow, that you should not consider that more is required for you than for others—my situation entitles you to it."

"Oh, I know that your kindness would do a great deal for me, but if you will not fatigue yourself about those things, and make yourself ill again, I will get our excellent friend the doctor to settle it all to your satisfaction."

"The captain is a gentlemanly sort of fellow," said the colonel, thoughtfully, "and they say knows something of a table, but I should like before going on board to know

exactly what sort of a cook he has. In matters of importance a man likes to go on sure ground. I shall ask Captain Landless to let him come up to Curzon's, and show us what he can do. Our bowberjee can give him some instruction in Hindoostanee cooking, which will be valuable; and his wines I should like to know if they are drinkable; but the most certain way will be to send my own; it is impossible that he can have any thing like them. It is a serious consideration, my dear, one's comfort at sea for five months, and must be properly attended to."

"You forget, I think, Cheapstow, that you are on a regimen, and that the doctor will be there to see it enforced."

"My first care to-morrow morning shall be to look over the list of our wines," answered the colonel, without attending to an observation which he was willing to think superfluous. "Now, let us go."

The colonel talked all the way back to Mr. Curzon's house, on the various schemes for the comfort of his voyage. "You see

what a fortunate thing it was, that I had that set of silver saucepans and spirit of wine lamps made. It would have been impossible to taste coffee or chocolate of their making. What we are to do for butter for breakfast, after the first week, is more than I can devise, unless indeed I can get the captain to give house-room to one of my cows, and then Myrza can make it every morning in the little glass churn as usual—I shall not lose an hour in putting all this in train.”

The carriage stopped, and Mr. Curzon came out to hand his new guest into his house, followed by the doctor, whom Mrs. Cheapstow was delighted to see.

Mr. Curzon continued talking with Mrs. Cheapstow, while her husband went over the whole of his intended arrangements with the doctor. Before he could get half through he was obliged to go down to dinner, but he had no sooner taken his seat at table than he began again.

“ I have just been telling the doctor, Cur-

zon," he said, " that I mean to ask Captain Landless to let his cook come here one of these nights, if you will permit me."

" Mr. Curzon will neither permit or encourage any thing of the kind," said Mrs. Cheapstow, answering for their host.

" Nor I, neither," joined the doctor, " though I have a high opinion of your bowberjee's talents, colonel. I think, as Mrs. Cheapstow has no objection, we had better leave them behind us at present."

" He knows some things, though," said the colonel, " which are not known to all the world—for instance, Curzon, he would have boiled this capital ham in champagne, and it would have been delicious;" helping himself to a second slice. " Allow me, Mr. Ouseley, to recommend it to you."

" I am so little of a connoisseur in the art, that you must make allowance for whatever you find out of rule here," answered Mr. Curzon.

" It is fortunate for you, Mr. Curzon," said Mrs. Cheapstow, " very fortunate, when

men have neither more nor less talents than their situation requires. Now Cheapstow has talents which can never be called into full exertion. Had he been a cook, instead of a colonel, he would have been an extraordinary traiteur, instead of an ordinary diplomatist."

"Whatever you may think of it, my dear," answered her husband, whose self-love felt the compliment on a favourite pursuit, and made allowance for his wife's way of expressing it, "there is often more nicety and precision and judgment required for the one than the other; to say nothing of exquisite taste, which is a gift from nature. Do not think that I will be laughed out of my opinion. What marks the advancement civilized life so much as this art? When was it ever found amongst savages, or men in a barbarous state? It has always flourished in the most refined and enlightened state of human society, and its progress is a just criterion to judge by."

"Of refinement, I grant you," replied Mrs.

Cheapstow, “if the word mean a perfect knowledge of the art of ministering to corporeal wants, which I fancy is the most generally received sense (though schoolmen may give other definitions), for we are too far advanced to go back to the old stoical or brahminical notion, ‘that he is the greatest, who has the fewest wants.’”

“An idea fit for a North American Indian,” said the colonel; “but utterly discarded by every polished people. Consider the ancient Greeks and Romans in the meridian of their refinement.”

“Or we might say, their corruption”—interrupted the doctor.

The colonel went on; “to what a height they carried the gastronomic art. And our accomplished neighbours, the French, our masters in art and invention,—have they not arrived at a very elevated pitch? to which I must confess for our credit we are fast hastening.”

“Forbid it,” said the doctor, “that we should sink into a nation of cooks: not that

I mean to take from the profession in its proper place, but forgive me colonel; I never wish to see it up stairs."

"We live in a period of discovery and invention," said Mrs. Cheapstow, "and so many conveniences have been sought out—so many delights have been supplied, that any man, who would discover means to enable the refined part of the world to consume twice as much of its good things as they can possibly do at present, would be entitled to a statue of gold; a reward greater than the King of Ethiopia offered for a new pleasure."

"Practical philosophy," said the colonel, "is always confined to a certain sphere in life; for when necessity gives the command, it is very well to give philosophy the credit."

"But," answered Mrs. Cheapstow, "the beautiful dreams of speculative philosophy are more attractive and suitable for those who have not to do with life's stern realities."

"I have heard the proposal for increasing

the wants of the natives of this country as the most certain means of introducing improvement amongst them. If, for instance, we could establish a Hindoo gastronomic academy, would not the advance be obvious?" said Mr. Curzon, laughing.

"Yes, certainly, and they had reason on their side who made the proposal," answered the colonel.

"If we could once get the Hindoos above the savage barbarity of resting satisfied with boiled rice and water, we might hope to see greater exertions made amongst them, to procure the comforts of life."

"The comforts of life, colonel, are after all but a vague expression," answered the doctor. "At least there is no idea that we have of them, that could indemnify a native for the interruption of his quiet—we must seek something else for those who think that it is better to sit than to stand—to lie than to sit—to sleep than to wake, and that to die is best of all."

CHAPTER VI.

—— Even Nature lives by toil :

Beast, bird, air, fire, the heavens, and rolling worlds,
All live by action. Man is born to care ;
Fashion'd, improved by labour. Hence utility
Through all conditions : hence the joys of health ;
Hence strength of arm and clear judicious thoughts.

DYER.

“ I WISH, doctor, that you would go out with me this morning, to pay a visit to my old friend Mrs. Harvey, if you have nothing else to do,” said Mrs. Cheapstow to Dr. M’Alpin, as they remained at the breakfast-table after the rest of the party had left it. “ You know I cannot very well leave Calcutta without visiting her, since Cheapstow cannot do it for me. I dread to let him run

about in the sun, more than is indispensable."

"Right," answered the doctor.

"Cheapstow must wait on the 'Lord Sahib,' and I hate going out alone."

"I am at your service. How do you go, and when?"

"The sooner the better; will you order the palanquins directly. Cheapstow takes the carriage for his visit of ceremony, and though I detest jogging so far in a palanquin, it will be better if I am admitted, than keeping Curzon's horses in the sun. Tell my ayah, that I am going out," she continued, addressing one of the servants in waiting.

"The order is given," answered the man, as he went out with his message.

In a few minutes he returned with a silver tray in his hand, on which was a fan, smelling-bottle, card-case, and pocket-handkerchief, which he carried down stairs before his mistress, and deposited in her chair palanquin.

“And there is another visit also, we should pay,” said Mrs. Cheapstow, before getting in. “A Major Middleton of the company’s service, has married the daughter of a particular friend of mine in England, and brought her out with him. I should like to see her if I knew where to find her.”

“Curzon has a chaprassee, who makes a point of knowing where every body that comes to Calcutta is to be found. He can help us—but I hope it’s not the Middleton that I knew at Benares, else, poor girl, she is not to be envied.”

When they arrived at Mrs. Harvey’s gate in Park-street, Chowringhee, the durwan only opened the wicket to see who came, and finding visitors said, “His *beebee sahib* (mistress) was not at home.”

Oh this is her old way,” said Mrs. Cheapstow to the doctor, “a relapse of her valedudinarian habits; but after coming so far, I will not go back without an effort to get in.”

“Is your mistress really not at home,”

demanding the doctor, addressing the durwan, "or is she ill, and does not see visitors?"

"The beebee sahib is in the house, sahib, and as well as is her custom, but there are no orders to let any stranger in."

"Send my card up to your mistress," ordered Mrs. Cheapstow. "I know," she said to the doctor, "when she sees it I shall be admitted."

The durwan did as he was bid, and sent up a chaprassey with the card, though he said his mistress never saw a strange face or heard a strange word. Contrary to his prediction, however, the chaprassey returned, begging Mrs. Cheapstow to walk up. The gates opened and the palanquins entered the spacious compound* of a very handsome house.

The doctor, giving his arm to Mrs. Cheapstow, was in the act of accompanying her upstairs, when another servant begged in a low voice that he would remain below, and

* Compound—enclosure within a high wall.

ushered him into the billiard-room with as little noise, as if there had been some one seriously ill in the house.

The doctor looked about for something to occupy the time he was thus forced to spend in waiting, and finding nothing else within his reach, took up a cue, and began to push about the billiard-balls.

“Don’t do that, sahib,” said a bearer respectfully, joining his hands as he spoke. “My mistress does not want the least noise, even to hear a crow speak as he flies in the air; we have a watchman with his bow and arrows to shoot every one that comes near this house.”

“What is the matter?” inquired the doctor.

“What do I know, sahib,” answered the bearer, with a shrug of his shoulders. “It is the beebee sahib’s pleasure not to have a sound outside or inside this house. She turns off every servant who treads heavier than a grasshopper, or speaks louder than a mouse.”

In these circumstances the doctor ordered the bearer to bring him a book, with which he would endeavour to pass the time until Mrs. Cheapstow's return, and was very much provoked when the bearer returned with the Civil and Military List, which he considered must, from its frequent requirement, be the most interesting. The "Neel Kittabee," Blue Book, the name they give it, from its being always bound in paper of that colour, is perhaps the only work which every servant in India knows by name.

On following her conductor up stairs, Mrs. Cheapstow found Mrs. Harvey extended upon a couch under the punkah, in the middle of the centre drawing-room. All the windows shut, and all the doors open to circulate a draft.

"How kind it is of you, my dear Mrs. Cheapstow" she said, half-raising herself from her pillows, "to come and see a poor invalid!"

"I am truly sorry to find you in such a sad state," answered Mrs. Cheapstow, and she added with her customary frankness, "I was

in hopes that you were not worse than usual."

"But I am usually so ill—I have such nerves—the least noise or motion distracts me."

"No wonder, if you keep yourself in this kind of dead silence, every noise becomes alarming; but I am happy, notwithstanding, to see you look better than I could have expected—you drive out in the evening, I suppose?"

"Never—it would be utterly impossible for me to sustain all that bustle and fatigue."

"But you could be carried down stairs you know."

"I used to be so, but the exertion agitated my poor frame so much, and I was so afraid that the bearers would let me fall (though I had a most commodious chair made for the very purpose), that I was obliged to give it up."

"And do you live then without air and exercise? How do you contrive to sleep at night?"

“ Oh! I have such horrible nights—if it were not for the little sleep I have here during the day, I do not know how I should get through them, though I have the punkah going in my bedroom the whole night.”

“ It is not every one of us certainly,” answered Mrs. Cheapstow, “ who has the native faculty of sleeping eighteen or nineteen hours out of the four-and-twenty.”

“ Unfortunately that is just my case,” answered the invalid, who in her earnestness to prove her unfitness for any exertion, sat upright on her couch, and spoke with great animation—“ and my appetite is so miserable too—if I had not something every three hours, I should die of pure inanition. No one can have the most distant idea of what I suffer—if it were not that this is the coolest room in the house, I would never venture to quit my own apartment”—she looked round on the splendid and silent suite of rooms—“ the doctor always says my life is a standing miracle.”

“ Finding how you do live, Mrs. Harvey, I should quite agree with him.”

From the time Mrs. Cheapstow had come into the room, Mrs. Harvey's *day* ayah, had sat quietly squatted at the end of her mistress's couch, holding upon her thumb the loop of a silk cord, which extended to the landing-place. This cord was now gently twitched, the ayah got up, and treading softly as if she feared to wake the echoes, went out of the room, and after whispering for a moment returned followed by a kitmutgar, who with the same noiseless step, set a tripod near Mrs. Harvey's couch, upon which, having first spread a table napkin, he placed a silver hot-water covered plate, knife, fork, and bread.

“ Will you eat a nice juicy mutton-chop, Mrs. Cheapstow?” inquired the invalid, as the kitmurgar uncovered her own.

“ Nothing is so good for those who are not strong;—a mutton-chop at this hour the doctor tells me, is the most nourishing thing

in the world—I take soups and jellies in the evening—may I order it?”

“Thank you, it is too soon after breakfast for me, and, in fact, I never touch any thing between meals.”

“How fortunate you are to be able to do without—I must even have something in the middle of the night.”

She held up her finger over her shoulder to the servant, who with crossed arms watched behind her couch. He went out on tiptoe, and returned with Madeira which misted the glass like ice as he poured it out to his mistress.

When she had finished the whole of her substantial refreshment, the things were removed with as little noise as they had been brought. The ayah again took her loop upon her thumb, and stationing herself on the floor as before, the same profound tranquillity was restored.

“Do you not pity me,” said Mrs. Harvey, laying herself languidly back upon her pil-

lows—" Do you not pity me Mrs. Cheapstow being obliged to lead such a life?"

" I never saw any person in my life whom I pity more; and is this your day?"

" Yes! and I may almost say my night also, with the difference of my being in my bedroom; I do not know that there is any other."

" But how do you do with your people? how are they able to stand it?"

" Oh! I have another set for the night—you know that the natives have no feeling to enable them to sit up with a poor invalid like me."

" But you do not mean, Mrs. Harvey to say, that you always lead this life?—you do not mean to say that you never go out, and take your meals at table like other people?"

" Yes, indeed I do. Unfortunately I grow every day worse and worse instead of better."

" And what does Mr. Harvey do? all this is doubtless very distressing to him, and he

must feel very lonely, if he has not company with him when he dines at home."

"Oh! he is very good, he just dines up here, because I like to see him; he has his dinner in the quiet way you saw me take my morsel just now."

"That is really being good," answered Mrs. Cheapstow, laughing—"and have you got his friends to be as good also?"

"No; but I have got him to give up ever asking any of them here—you are the only stranger who has been within these doors time out of memory."

"I am sorry to hear it; for living in this way alone, is, at least, half the cause of your illness."

"I have not spirits to see any one, talking quite exhausts me; though I confess, my dear Mrs. Cheapstow, that I have been benefited by seeing you this morning."

"Why do you not go home? a cold climate would set all to rights."

"That is what Harvey says, but a ship would make me miserable, I should be with-

out my comforts, and without my attendants; the noise would distract me; the trouble would kill me. I am altogether so differently constructed from other people."

Mrs. Cheapstow felt that any thing she could say on this subject would be perfectly unavailing, and therefore abstained from pressing it, she saw with pity the effect of climate and indulgence upon a weak mind, and rose to take her leave fully convinced of the hopelessness of the case.

The ayah in turn twitched the cord, and a chaprassey in waiting showed himself at the door, to conduct the guest down stairs with the same silence as before. Mrs. Cheapstow remarked that the dumb attendants had looked with wonder at hearing her address their mistress in an ordinary voice, never being accustomed to hear any one, even her husband, speak to her in a tone above a whisper.

Mrs. Cheapstow on reaching the hall, found her worthy friend the doctor's patience almost expended, as the "Neel

Kittabee" did not contain anything very new, and was more interesting to those who were entering than to those who were quitting the service.

"One would think," he said, as he handed Mrs. Cheapstow into her palanquin, "one would think that my excellent friends were in league to reconcile me to my bachelor condition. You have shown me this morning, that I might be worse off, and Curzon did the same the other night."

"Yes, yes, doctor, if you begin to grumble on that score I shall be tempted to make some more visits for your conviction, though I am so fatigued with this I have made, that I shall be glad to get home. I am quite overcome with pity for poor Harvey—think of a man going up and down stairs on tiptoe all his life, and speaking in whispers, and being served by signs, and as effectually cut off from society as if he were on a desert island!"

"Ay," answered the doctor, "he is to be pitied, when the mind is entirely neglected the body takes up all our attention; that's

of all diseases the most incurable—but you forget Mrs. Middleton : if she has married the man I suppose, it will be an act of charity to visit her.”

“This visit had almost put every thing else out of my head ; but can you direct my people ?”

The doctor gave the necessary address, and they took their way through the Durum-tollah, into the Circular Road ; where, after a good deal of searching, they were carried into the compound of a small “lower-roomed” house, daubed on the outside with yellow ochre ; standing upon the bank of a little stagnate tank, or rather muddy pool, which had been scooped out as the clay was wanted for building the native huts in the neighbourhood ; it was covered with decayed vegetation, and overhung by tall melancholy cocoa-nuts, which looked more solitary in proportion to the numbers got together ; no green thing grows under them, and their tall branchless trunks give them a funeral appearance.

“This can never be Middleton’s place,”

said the doctor, "it must be some country-born Portuguese writer's."

"What gentleman's house?" demanded Mrs. Cheapstow's chaprassey, of a half-naked bearer who was sleeping in the veranda, and who started up rubbing his eyes, when the chaprassey pulled him by the foot, and shook him by the shoulders to obtain an answer.

"Major Middleton Sahib's house."

"Is the 'beebee sahib' at home?"

"Me—what do I know?" said the bearer, still rubbing his eyes, and making a few steps towards the hall, and then returning as if uncertain what was to be done.

The chaprassey who was accustomed to more alacrity in the service of his mistress, ran forward and announced "Beebee Chip-tow, and Dr. Al-pin Sahib," at the pitch of his voice, and returned to open the palanquin-door, saying "the lady was at home."

Mrs. Cheapstow got out in a veranda, littered with straw, packing-cases, and empty bottles, &c., the doctor conducted her

into the small hall, miserably furnished without mat, the want of that necessary article was supplied by a common settringee under the feet of the table in the middle of the floor. The whole house consisted of this hall on the one side, and two small apartments off it at the other.

“A place for a native,” muttered the doctor, as he crossed the threshold and entered the little comfortless abode, from which even a breath of air was excluded by the tall trees which run up above the back windows. The mark of green damp on the walls added to the idea which Mrs. Cheapstow conceived at first sight, that it was just a place to catch fever and ague.

They found Mrs. Middleton seated before the table on which she was writing. She rose timidly, and made several ineffectual efforts to make her solitary attendant understand that she wanted more chairs, Mrs. Cheapstow’s chaprassey, however, alertly saved her any further trouble on that score, by placing those required.

Mrs. Cheapstow after introducing herself and the doctor, and inquiring for Mrs. Middleton's friends at home, expressed the pleasure she would have had in being introduced to her husband:

"I regret he is absent," answered his wife; "and I am certain he will himself regret missing the pleasure of seeing you, Mrs. Cheapstow, but he is never at home."

"How!" said the doctor; "he does not leave you here all day by yourself?"

"Yes—indeed he does; he has so many friends in Calcutta, and I am a perfect stranger."

"And when he is absent, how do you do with the servants? Ye have not been here long enough to make yourself well understood?" asked the doctor.

"Oh no—only a fortnight, and I cannot call for any thing, but must be contented with what they please to give me. Yesterday I had no dinner—there was none brought, and I could not order it."

The doctor looked at Mrs. Cheapstow, as if he would say, "that is just the man—selfish and inconsiderate as usual."

"Do you," inquired Mrs. Cheapstow, "not tire, Mrs. Middleton, living here by yourself—you must be very dull?"

"Yes; but I hope we shall soon leave the Presidency, and then, Major Middleton tells me, it will be more cheerful: he has no conveyance but his palanquin, and cannot take me out."

The doctor was tempted to say, "then he ought to stay at home himself;" but the ungracious observation did not pass his lips.

"You go out," he said, "to drive in the evening certainly, "at least with some of your friends?"

"No, indeed I do not. I do not know a single creature in the place—Mrs. Cheapstow and yourself are the first who have had the kindness to inquire for me; and I find living in India entirely different to what

I expected—every article of food is so bad, and every thing so uncomfortable, that I sincerely wish myself back in England.”

“You must not be discouraged,” said Mrs. Cheapstow, “by the unfavourable specimen you have had. When you know the country, you will find it entirely different.”

“Oh, I am certain I shall never be reconciled to it. Last night I was so frightened! an enormous bat flew into the room while I was sitting here in the dark, for they forgot to light the lamps as well as to give me any dinner, and the creature made such a horrid squeaking, that I was almost terrified to death.”

Mrs. Cheapstow felt sincerely for a poor young creature, left in such a forlorn situation, and denied the common comforts of existence, by the selfish carelessness of one who had taken her so far from the bosom of her family. She made Mrs. Middleton promise to spend a day with her at Mr. Curzon's, and offered to send the carriage to

convey her. She then took leave, and they had hardly gained the veranda before the doctor began expressing his regret at leaving such a pretty young creature, in such miserable circumstances.

“ Middleton is just the same man I find,” he said, when they were out of hearing; “ he guides this wife just as he did the first. I remember when she was dying, he dined out every night all over cantonments.”

“ It is a cruel thing, doctor, to take an amiable girl from her family, where she has been loved and cherished, and bring her out here to die of neglect and unkindness.”

“ He would have sought long in this country, I promise him, before he would have got such a wife—his character is too well known; but in England, where nobody knows any thing about him, or his behaviour to his poor first wife, he has had better success.”

“ I am sorry for her, poor thing—hers is a melancholy prospect—she little knows the fatigues and sufferings of following such a

man in a country like this. He is not one of the men, doctor, to use an expression of yours, that a woman would go through fire and water for; but fortunately it is a case that we do not often meet."

"That's true; prodigality, and not penury, is the habit of the country; and if we do meet with the griping hands, it must be so much nature with them, that it seldom keeps bounds. I *have* seen in the course of my life one or two rare examples, even here."

"At home, if a woman has the misfortune to marry a negligent, selfish man, as this seems to be, wholly devoted to his own comfort and pleasure, she has, if not the satisfaction of her friend's society, at least the attendance of her own women. The circumstances are so different, that the cases hardly admit of a parallel. Here, a woman's life is in the hands of her husband—if he neglects her, every servant in the house does the same."

“ Middleton, is one of the ‘ Company’s hard bargains,’ he would never willingly do any thing for them, but receive his pay. He turns his duty over to any one that will do it for him, and has always been sick when his corps is to go on service; and never cooks a dinner in his own house, when he can get it elsewhere. He likes every part of good eating, but its cost; and it is nothing to him that his poor wife, is dining upon a starved bazar chicken, dried in the cinders, while he is in the fort, in the ‘ Buildings,’ and the race-stand, and at the town-hall with the ‘ Lunatic Club.’* He knows that Gunter† dresses things more to his taste, than he is likely to get them in the miserable hole in which he has stowed his pretty wife, poor thing !”

Mrs. Cheapstow and Dr. M’Alpin reached home in time for tiffin, and found the man,

* Lunatic club, so called from the meetings being held at the new and full of the moon.

† Gunter, a celebrated *traiteur*.

whose house they had just left, talking with Mr. Ouseley in the drawing-room.

“ We have just come from your house,” said the doctor, after having introduced Major Middleton to Mrs. Cheapstow.

“ You did not find any one at home ?” he said. “ How unfortunate I should happen to be out when you did us the honour to call, Mrs. Cheapstow !”

“ We were more successful,” replied the doctor—“ finding that Mrs. Middleton was not from home, we made good our entry, though the only one of your people we saw wished to keep us out.”

“ I am quite ashamed Mrs. Cheapstow,” said Major Middleton, with an air of embarrassment, “ that you should have the trouble of going to such a place, which in fact I intend to quit as soon as possible—the truth is, before landing from the ship, I employed a sircar to take a house for me, and he put us into that miserable out-of-the-way corner ; but I have been out every day since we came, to seek for a proper place.”

“And not found a house in the fifteen days, that your wife tells me, you have been here, Middleton?” said the doctor, “I’ll engage to provide you with a comfortable abode before sunset this evening. There’s no lack of them in Calcutta. Will you, Ouseley, as you pass the Tennis Court, step in and inquire—”

“Not for the world!” interrupted Mr. Middleton, hastily, “I could not think, Mr. Ouseley, of letting you take such trouble—my dear M’Alpin, this is really too kind.”

“The kindness is not intended for you Middleton, so do not distress yourself about it. It is for your wife’s sake that I am anxious you should be out of that pestilential neighbourhood. As a medical man I have a right to direct it, and I tell you that I’ll get a good house, in a proper situation, before sunset. It does not do for a young girl just come from Europe to breathe the infectious air of your place.”

“You shall not positively take any trou-

ble on the score, M'Alpin—I heard to day of a house which I think will suit us.”

“ Get into it then, my friend, or never let me see your face again. The doctor's advice is not to be slighted with impunity—and get a carriage to give your wife a mouthful of fresh air too,” said the doctor in a tone between jest and earnest—“ I prescribe according to the circumstances of my patients.”

“ I wish you would prescribe a buggy for me, doctor,” said Mr. Ouseley, laughing, “ I would get it directly if you would only authorize me to write home to my father, and say the doctor ordered it.”

“ Fair and softly my friend, content yourself with your horse until you have a wife to drive, or a majority to support it.”

“ Our friend, the doctor, Mrs. Cheapstow,” said Major Middleton, with the air of plausibility and easy assurance, which often passes current for agreeable manners and knowledge of the world, “ our excellent friend in his old

way avails himself of all his privileges—but here is the consummah—allow me to have the honour of conducting you to table.”

“ Mrs. Cheapstow will never be answerable for the sin of keeping you from your wife, Middleton.”

Major Middleton saw the intention, but was resolved to stand his ground, as was his custom, against all rebuffs—“ Mrs. Middleton is one of the most domestic creatures in the world,” he said to Mrs. Cheapstow in going down stairs, “ there is no getting her to go out—and I regret exceedingly being obliged to leave her so much alone. You know my duty must be attended to, and I am forced to run from one public office to another, all round Calcutta—I am obliged to go to the Adjutant-general’s directly after tiffin, and I took the only spare minute I could command, Mrs. Cheapstow, to have the honour of waiting upon you, whom I have often heard Mrs. Middleton’s friends at home speak of with the utmost respect and affection.”

“ Middleton knows to choose the hour well for his spare moments,” whispered the doctor to Mr. Ouseley as they followed down stairs—“ if he would only put the talents that nature has bestowed upon him, to any creditable purpose, he might make a respectable figure in the world, instead of shaping himself into a poor parasite, whose whole value is in his banker’s hands. Was it ever heard of, that a man in his situation in life—in the situation of a gentleman, should tell the lies that he has done within the last half-hour? The thought of seeking for a house never entered into his head, any more than going to England in a balloon entered into mine. He will not rest now until he has hooked himself upon Curzon for a visiter after I am out of the way—I know that fellow so well.”

Mr. Ouseley laughed immoderately at what he considered the doctor’s odd ways, and they just reached the table in time to hear Major Middleton say to Mrs. Cheapstow,

“and am I not to have the honour of being introduced to Colonel Cheapstow, to-day?”

“He went out early this morning,” answered his wife, “and has not yet returned. A thing very unusual with him I can assure you; but here he comes to speak for himself”—as Colonel Cheapstow’s chaprasseys entered, one carrying his hat, and another his sword, while their master followed.

The major was introduced, and Colonel Cheapstow received his compliments with dignified gravity.

Middleton was not so much his equal as to be received upon a perfect footing of equality, and yet too near it to be treated with the unceremonious kindness, which Colonel Cheapstow extended to young Ouseley, and all those whose situation made them receive as a favour, what they could not claim as a right.

“And what, my dear, has detained you so long?” inquired his wife.

“His lordship was so happy to see me, that I found it impossible to get away; and he insisted upon my going up to visit his lady, who inquired most kindly and particularly after you, my dear,” answered the colonel, who seemed highly gratified with the attention he had received. “His lordship is a man of sound sense and great penetration and discernment; he is quite pleased with all I have done. I have promised, my dear, that you will dine at government-house to-morrow night.”

“It is unfortunate; for Curzon has been kind enough to ask friends here on purpose to meet us.”

“The Governor-general’s invitation is a command,” said the doctor, “and all other engagements must give way. Though I have been engaged to a friend for the last week, I must dine there to-night—I wish it had been to-morrow.”

“And when his lordship has made the evening for you, my dear,” said Colonel

Cheapstow to his wife, "it must be taken as a compliment."

"I have understood from one who is much about the house," said Major Middleton, "that his lordship had expressed a great desire to see you, Colonel Cheapstow."

"Do you hear that?" said the doctor aside to Ouseley; "if Curzon had been here, his lordship would perhaps have been talking, too, of Persian and Hindostanee works."

Colonel Cheapstow was, however, a perfect stranger to Major Middleton, and received his gratuitous information in quite a different spirit.

"Allow me," he said, "the pleasure to take wine with you, Major Middleton. I thought, my dear," addressing his wife, "that I was received with more than usual satisfaction."

After tiffin, Major Middleton took his departure, but not before he had declared his

intention to Mrs. Cheapstow, of returning the first evening he could possibly command, as that was the only time he could hope to find Mr. Curzon in his own house.

CHAPTER VII.

Their stately ship sail'd gallantly,
Furrowing the dark sea foam,
But many a prow has left the strand
That never reach'd her home!

OLD BALLAD.

COLONEL CHEAPSTOW'S numerous purchases were completed, his comforts provided, and his cabins furnished with every convenience that could render a voyage delightful, by the time the *Snowdon* was in readiness to sail from Sangor Island.

Mr. Curzon who saw the departure of his highly-valued friend, Dr. M'Alpin with great regret, as there was no chance of their ever meeting again, resolved to accompany

the party going from his own house down to the ship. Colonel and Mrs. Cheapstow occupied one Sangor passage-boat, Dr. M'Alpin and Mr. Curzon another.

Mr. Curzon parted from his friends the night they reached the vessel, as she was to sail at daybreak.

“ Could I but hope to see you, Curzon,” said the doctor, as he wrung the hand of his friend—“ could I but hope to see you in my own house !”

“ It cannot be, M'Alpin. God bless you, my friend. Farewell !”

The doctor felt when Mr. Curzon was over the ship's side, as if his last regret at leaving India was passed; his kind heart had suffered by the clamorous leave-taking of his own servants before he came into the ship; some had prostrated themselves on the ground and embraced his feet, while others had lifted up their voices and wept aloud, and he could not see those who had been about him for so many years for the last time, with indifference.

Cussim Ali was now all that remained to him of his numerous household, and the poor creature seemed overcome with trouble at parting with his own people and his own land, and finding himself in a situation so new; but whatever his thoughts might be, he gave them no tongue, having practical philosophy enough to understand, that they could be of no interest to any one there, except his master, whom he felt to be too much above his sphere to be troubled with "such words."

At daybreak the anchor was up, and the *Snowdon* stood down the bay; there was only one passenger on board for China besides our friends already mentioned, and a detachment of European troops with their wives and children for one of the islands. Before the party assembled at dinner, they had lost sight of the flat shores of Bengal, and a thick fog came on, though the little wind they had continued fair.

The following morning the mist still remained so thick that they could not get an ob-

servation; towards evening the wind sunk to a perfect calm, and they felt themselves to be under the influence of the currents which run with great force in the Bay of Bengal—a situation the more hazardous, as the weather for several days continued equally thick, and they were consequently unable to judge of their course.

On the evening of the third day, when Mr. Clairville, the passenger already mentioned, was walking the deck with Captain Landless, and occasionally leaning over the lee-gangway to observe the fog which was slowly dispersing, he asked the captain, “What can that be which I see white, on our lee-bow?”

“White? where? the moonshine on the water, I suppose; pass the word for my night telescope there,” answered the captain.

“Ay, ay, sir.”

“Down helm, and about ship!” thundered the captain.

“Breakers on our lee-bow! Breakers

ahead ! Breakers astern !” sung out the man on the foretop.

In an instant all was in motion, the alarming intelligence had brought every one within hearing of it on deck. The ship under the influence of strong currents, and without wind to fill her backed sails, refused to obey the helm, and in a few minutes, notwithstanding every exertion, struck with a shock which brought the masts over her side. She made a plunge under the falling mass.

“ Cut the riggings !” shouted the captain.

The ready carpenters obeyed the prompt order ; the severed masts floated under the prow. When the ship struck, a shriek rose from the lower decks, capable of striking terror into any heart, less tried in danger than those of the brave seamen, whose energies seemed roused by such a call. Those who had been in bed came rushing upon deck to ascertain their fate, the women and children, many of whom had been dashed from their cots by the shock,

heightened the alarm and confusion by their presence and their screams.

“Peace, for an instant, I command you !” said Captain Landless, darting into the midst of the terrified group, and waving his arm with an air of authority. “Peace, on your lives, and hear me. We have struck on a sunken rock, and may yet have time to save ourselves in the boats.”

He had no sooner spoken the words than there was a rush towards them.

“Hear, boatswain !” he cried, “with the quartermasters, guard the boats, and cut down the first living creature who dares to touch them without orders.” The frightened multitude stood still. “Gentlemen, exert the authority which God has given you. Command your families, and all will be well.”

The steadiness of one man in authority, produced a kind of order out of confusion. The seamen, accustomed to hear and obey his voice in danger, stood ready to do his bidding, and the gentlemen and passengers,

aware of the necessity of subordination and co-operation, exerted an effectual authority as soon as their respective children were gathered round their distracted mothers. The captain seeing in an instant what was to be done for the salvation of those under his care, ordered the boats to be lowered, and the lead to be flung, for the purpose of taking soundings.

The fall of the masts was a fortunate circumstance; as soon as they were cut away, the ship was lightened, and perhaps by that means prevented from further motion, which must have been instantly fatal. She had struck on the sharp point of a rock under water, which entering through the bottom, held her in equal balance, and prevented her from sinking, though the water rose in the orlop and even gun deck, to a level with the sea. The moment of striking was announced by a general and wild shriek of unearthly energy, and followed by the continued gurgling of the water, increasing in loudness as it increased in quantity, and

forced its way through all opposition into every crevice and opening of the ship. The women, frantic with terror, rushed about screaming for their children.

“It is all over,” said Colonel Cheapstow, who met one of these poor creatures at his cabin-door. “Those who have children, are equal with those who have none; but I shall do what I can for you, though it is but for a moment.”

As he spoke, a swell upon which the vessel could not rise, broke over her, and again the same dread shriek sounded, though hoarser and deeper, as if almost suffocated with the weight of the water. The vessel stood firm, and though many persons were thrown down and severely hurt, none were washed overboard, as uninjured by the storm the bulwarks retained their position.

“We may stand until the next tide,” said the captain, “therefore until the boats are in readiness, let the women and children be taken into the cabins that are not under water, it is useless to expose any one here,

who is not on duty, to be mutilated by the swells which must break over us."

"Let us take wine in the boat for these poor creatures," said Dr. M'Alpin.

He went into his cabin for the purpose of getting it, and Mrs. Cheapstow also passed out the few bottles which her husband always kept at hand, which were all that could be found, as the rest of the vessel was now under water.

As soon as the long boat was lowered into the sea, Mrs. Cheapstow and the soldiers' wives and children were safely placed in it.

"Dr. M'Alpin will go in that boat, where his assistance may be so much wanted," said Captain Landless.

"Willingly," answered the doctor, "but I must take Cussim Ali with me."

"Impossible!" said the officer in command of the boat, "there is but room for one person."

"And who," demanded the captain sternly, "is this Cussim Ali?"

“My servant,” answered the doctor, “who is under my protection, and who has left kindred and country to follow me, and whom I will never leave in a situation of danger while the breath is in my body.”

“Let him go Manning,” said the captain, “his weight cannot much affect you.”

The doctor got into the long boat, and received his half-dead domestic from the hands of the stout seamen, who lowered him down, benumbed by cold and wet.

The boat pushed off. “We are too heavy,” said the officer, “too deep in the water,” as drawn by the currents they passed close under the bow of the ship.

A native Portuguese, in an agony of fear, caught a rope, and threw himself with it from the bowsprit in hopes of attaining the boat. The rowers made every effort to shoot ahead, but he swam stoutly, and had just attained his object, and laid his right hand on the side of the boat, which his weight brought to a level with the water.

“We are gone!” shouted the helmsman with a fearful oath.

The officer in command of the boat snatched an oar, and with a tremendous blow broke the clinging arms of the swimmer, who fell off with a look on the face of the officer which curdled the blood of those who beheld it. The women covered their eyes, the boat righted, and the sufferer, with one strong convulsive gasp, sunk like a stone, and was seen no more. For an instant the whirling waters eddied round in the spot where he disappeared, and then a bubble broke, as the breath of life, over which they closed, rose to the surface.

“An unblessed deed!” said the doctor. “I would not have the expression of those eyes turned upon me for all the sun looks down upon.”

“I have done my duty,” said Manning, resting upon the oar he had just used. “The lives of all here were intrusted to my care, and if it had been my own brother I

must have done the same; another instant would have sent every soul to the bottom."

"Ay, ay, sir," answered the weather-beaten helmsman, "a seaman's duty is sometimes harder than a landsman dreams of."

"As God knows this night can testify," said the doctor, whose strongly agitated countenance showed the agony which was within.

Mrs. Cheapstow continued to rest her head on her hand, while her fingers covered her eyes. Manning in the stern, conscious that he had done his duty, attended only to the movements of the boat under his care. A clear morning began to dawn, and he found that drawn by the currents, they were within a short distance of a little rocky island which seemed to be thickly wooded. They were obliged to coast the whole side of the island nearest to them before they could find a landing-place; at length they fortunately discovered a small sandy bay, on one side of which a flat ledge of rock ran into the sea like a natural pier, and as the

water was deep enough to admit the boat's coming quite close, the women and children were landed without difficulty. Manning superintended the whole operation, and gave the most active assistance, though Mrs. Cheapstow almost shrunk from his offered help.

Cussim Ali, who was the last of the passengers to quit the boat, and who had not altogether recovered from his cold and sickness, in endeavouring to reach from the side to the shore, where his master extended a hand to assist him, lost his footing, fell between the boat and the rock, and was out of sight in an instant.

"Let go the cable!" cried Manning to the men who held the vessel in shore, by a rope from her bow, while stripping off his jacket and throwing it on the beach, as he spoke, he jumped into the water.

The boat drifted from the shore, and neither Cussim Ali or Manning were visible to the anxious spectators. In a few seconds however, the latter rose to the surface, with

what appeared to be the drowned body of the poor native in his left hand, which he had strongly clenched in the Mussulman's sash. He swam with him towards the boat which pulled to meet him, and a seaman with powerful arm at once lifted him in. Manning turned, and soon reached the shore, where in another instant he was assisting the men to hawl in the boat, which was no sooner effected than Cussim Ali was delivered to his master, not drowned, but so near it, that it required some exertion of the doctor's art to restore him to life.

When the doctor was quite satisfied of his poor follower's recovery, he remembered his deliverer.

"Sir," he said going up to Manning, who, as soon as he saw that Cussim was out of danger, only thought of wringing the water from his clothes. "What can I do, to show my sense of what you have this day done—you have preserved a life that though of but little worth to others, is much to me."

"I have done but my duty," answered the

officer with the utmost unconcern. "I would deserve to be blamed if I had done otherwise."

"You risked your life to save that poor creature, who would have been drowned, had it not been for you," said the doctor.

"The boat, and every one in it, was put under my care, by my captain, and I hope I know my duty as a seaman better than to let life, or any thing else come between me and its execution."

"Nobly answered!" said the doctor, "and I hope ye'll forgive what I said in a moment when I could not so well judge of your sentiments."

"Freely," returned the officer,—“I did my duty then, and I did no more now. It cannot be expected that a landsman should enter into a seaman's feelings—though you too, doctor, have perhaps witnessed a regimental flogging, and in the discharge of *your* duty, let the drummers lay in, while the man was able to bear another lash, and you may have used the knife and lopped the

limb, when it was necessary for the preservation of the body. But the tide is now upon the turn, and we must take advantage of it, to get back to the ship."

After Manning had left him, the doctor stood for a few minutes musing upon a leaf in the human heart, which had not yet fallen under his observation. "Here is a heart of iron," he said, "in a breast of steel, as his messmates will say, but the more flinty the duties are which strike upon it, the brighter will the sparkles from it be; and I almost believe he has as much satisfaction in the one duty this day performed, as in the other; the single circumstance of its being duty, hallows it in his eyes. When I saw a suppliant wretch clinging for life, he only saw an imminent danger to those under his care, and his only thought was to save them; and when it was done, I can never forget the look of those eyes; he neither saw, nor heard, nor thought of any thing but the vessel under his command, as she righted, and he thinks as little of having risked his life to save my

poor Cussin; but whatever he may think of it, I'll never forget it, and it will go hard with me, but it will meet him yet."

With this resolution the doctor rejoined Mrs. Cheapstow, whom he found with the soldier's wives and children,—“Do you see any thing of the Colonel,” she said, “doctor? surely the second boat, in which he and the men were to come, might be here by this time.”

“That's impossible, with such currents, and the tide too against them,” answered the doctor, “so we need not expect them yet for an hour or more—and in the mean time, while I go and look for a better place, stay you here in the shelter of the rocks.”

“I will go with you, doctor,” said Mrs. Cheapstow. “I have no children to detain me, and I will take this mug, which somebody has fortunately brought on shore, and endeavour to find water for the poor infants who are dying with thirst. The little wine which we took with us is all expended, and

it seems rather to have increased the evil than done any good."

"Keep your children in the shadow of the rocks," said the doctor to the women who were anxiously thronging round to hear what was determined upon. "Try to amuse them, and keep them from crying, which makes them but the more thirsty, and we will return as soon as we have found any thing eatable or drinkable."

The doctor had providently brought his gun, and made himself almost certain of meeting with birds of some kind. "I cannot speak to you of what has passed this day," said Mrs. Cheapstow to the doctor as soon as they were alone—"Let us rather think and speak of what we have to do; I trust the other boats will soon arrive; I am miserable about Cheapstow, who I know cannot and will not leave the vessel until the soldiers are out of it."

"If we could but discover fruit or water, we might do until the other boats come, for they will certainly bring us something else, we shall

be in a fearful condition with these famishing bairns, and their miserable mothers; but let us hope the best, and try what we can do."

Cussim Ali recovered from the effects of a plunge, which had nearly cost him his life, followed his master, and earnestly sought for the two necessaries of which they were so much in want. Finding that their little island was altogether flat, he mounted into the top of a tall tree, and from that height perceived a pool of water, through a small opening in the wood—Cussim had a considerable portion of the activity and intelligence which is oftener found in Hindostan among old men than young; though he had certainly passed his youth, he had not attained the years which his white beard might seem to indicate. When from the top of the tree he had announced his joyful discovery (and the inordinate quantity of salt water he had taken made him doubly rejoice in the sight of fresh), his master and Mrs. Cheapstow went to the spot, and had the satisfaction to find that it was better than could have been expected.

“I have my gun, you see, Mrs. Cheapstow,” said the doctor, “so do not be afraid of wild animals ; but it is better to try and find whether they haunt here, before we bring these poor creatures and their little ones.”

After the narrowest inspection of the pool and its neighbourhood, Cassim Ali gave it as his opinion that there were no beasts of any kind there ; and on such a subject his was a high authority, as he had all his life been a kind of sportsman in his leisure hours, and been accustomed to provide something for his own curry, and, to use his own phrase, “knew that work well.”

“There are no beasts here, sahib,” he said, “not even deer ; you see that the moss on the trees is untouched, and even the long tender shoots from the root, which deer like best ; your own eyes see that, sahib, and if there are no deer there can be no tigers ; what would they eat in such a place as this?”

Relieved from apprehension on this score,

the doctor and Mrs. Cheapstow returned to the spot where they left their fellow-sufferers with the good news of their discovery. On reaching the beach, they had the satisfaction to see another boat from the ship so near, that they could distinguish Colonel Cheapstow and Mr. Clairville, amongst the soldiers with whom it was filled.

Mrs. Cheapstow went forward on the rocks to meet her husband, who vainly begged she would not expose herself in the sun, and when the first pleasure of seeing him safely landed, had subsided, she perceived that he was followed by his Portuguese servant Mirza, carrying a well-stuffed bag over his shoulder.

“What have you brought, Cheapstow?” demanded his wife. “Provisions I trust, for we have not been able to find any eatable thing in this uninhabited place.”

“How unfortunate,” said the colonel, “I never for an instant doubted of your finding plenty of game, and have even made Mirza bring a lamp and some sauce that we might

do them justice. However, we shall certainly find fish, and the sauce will not be altogether useless."

"But that is not all your bag contains—what else have you?"

"A change of clothes for you, my dear, and your jewel-box, which I saved from the hands of one of the men, who was in the act of breaking up your trunks, after the first boat had left the vessel; and I have also taken my own boat cloak and M'Alpin's, which by your account of the place, are more likely to be useful than the first-mentioned articles; since there are no lives lost, nor I hope likely to be, (for I think the captain and the whole of the seamen will be here in a few hours,) the worst part of our disaster, is falling on a desert island."

"The longboat then, which brought us here, had not reached the ship before you left it, Cheapstow?" demanded his wife.

"No, nor was she within hail of us—we saw her at a distance, taking advantage of the currents which set outwards, while we

were obliged to do just the contrary. But the captain when he returns in her, will not omit to bring provisions of all sorts, and shooting and fishing materials. There must be something on the island."

"I fear that with so many we shall be dreadfully off," answered Mrs. Cheapstow; "but I am very much obliged to you for thinking of my comfort in such circumstances."

The seamen who had brought this last boat were so much fatigued with the hard labour they had had in pulling against the currents and ebb tide, that they declared themselves utterly unable to go off again until the afternoon. It was in vain that Colonel Cheapstow and Dr. M'Alpin urged them by every argument they could think of to make a strenuous exertion, where time was so precious, the heat of the sun and intense thirst had quite exhausted them, and they with the rest took their way to the water which had just been discovered; there, having satisfied their thirst they

threw themselves to sleep in the shade of the trees. Some of the soldiers had fortunately taken a few biscuits in their pockets, which soaked in the water, served for a time to allay the hunger of the children; others had loaded themselves, as far as they could do it, without being perceived, with things of more value and less utility.

“This is dreadful, M’Alpin!” said the colonel. “What can be done for ourselves, and these unhappy infants, who must perish if relief is not speedily procured?”

“This island,” answered the doctor, “has every appearance of being utterly uninhabited by either man or beast—still we are not altogether sure—my advice is, that we keep ourselves quiet until the sun is a little lower (for it would be making bad worse to bring illness amongst us), and then make the circuit of the place.”

“I quite agree with you, M’Alpin,” answered Col. Cheapstow, “and then let us divide into separate parties, and coast the

island in opposite directions, some within and some without the rocks, as at low water we may possibly find turtle or fish of some kind, and we shall at once ascertain whether it contains animals, fowls, fruit, or any thing eatable, without wasting our strength in useless anticipations."

The plan of operation once fixed, the parties waited more particularly for the hour when they could put it into execution. Dr. M'Alpin tried to persuade Col. Cheapstow, whose health was but partially re-established, to leave him, Mr. Clairville, and the men to undertake this fatiguing research; he, however, in his character as commanding officer, was by no means to be dissuaded from undertaking what he conceived to be a duty upon him, and he set out on the circuit of discovery in one direction with some of the men, while Dr. M'Alpin and Mr. Clairville took another. Mrs. Cheapstow, with the rest of the party, remained near the landing-place, in case the boat should arrive in their absence.

After a long and fatiguing walk over sharp and slippery coral rocks, Colonel Cheapstow and his friend Dr. M'Alpin met on the other side of the island, without having discovered any thing but a few shellfish left among the rocks by the ebb, and a few sea cocoanuts above the water-mark, which seemed rather to have been thrown on the beach by the tide, than to be the produce of the island. Weary and dispirited they were joined by Mr. Clairville and the others, who had explored the interior with as little success. Some large rats, making their way to the sea-shore, to feed upon what the ebb might have left them, were the only living creatures they had seen.

“If there were monkeys,” said Cussim Ali, “we would have been sure of fruit, and if there were birds we should find grain; but there is neither the one nor the other: in this bad place there is nothing but water to fill our stomachs.”

“It's but too true, Cussim,” said his mas-

ter; "but if there's nothing to benefit us, there's nothing to hurt us, so we must just go back again and wait till the boats come."

CHAPTER VIII.

'Tis not for mortals always to be bless'd ;
But him the least the dull or painful hours
Of life oppress, whom sober sense conducts,
And virtue through this labyrinth we tread.

ARMSTRONG.

FROM the moment the ship struck, Captain Landless had only thought of saving the lives of those under his command, as it was plain that in such a situation the vessel could not very long hold together. To send off the boats with as many as they could contain was therefore his first object; "If we can land the people," he said to Manning, "we shall be able to get provisions

afterwards, and if we cannot do both, at all events let us save the lives first."

Unfortunately, in getting the boats into the water, some neglect occurred in the darkness and confusion, by which two of them were staved against the ship's side, so that two only remained for the present service. The longboat, under Manning's skilful direction, after having landed her passengers, reached the wreck just as the tide began to make, and the swell agitated the ship so much that the captain almost feared that she would have floated from her present position, when she must inevitably go down.

After the two boats containing all the passengers, and a few of the ship's company had left him, Captain Landless found, that by the flow of the tide, he and the seamen would be obliged to betake themselves to the maintop, the only part of the rigging which yet remained standing, and which they had reason to be thankful had not been cut away with the rest. The water

now rose over the maindeck, and from its weight and pressure on the vessel widened the opening below, so that she commenced to rock and plunge a little head and stern.

“We shall stand out this tide, I think,” said the captain.

“If it does not come on to blow,” answered the boatswain; “and for the present it looks well to windward. We shall stand this tide, though our seams begin to open.”

“Mr. Manning must soon be here with the longboat,” said the captain. “She will be enough for all the hands we have now; and when the jolly-boat returns, she will be able, by the ebb, to get some spirits, rice, and hams.”

These being the stores most at hand, and least likely to suffer from the water, which had drowned the whole of the live-stock in the commencement, and washed them overboard very soon after.

From the maintop, Captain Landless watched the return of his boats, and saw with his telescope that Mr. Manning had

pushed off from the island with the first of the ebb, though the currents ran with such violence that he seemed to make but little progress, and he perceived with infinite anxiety, that what the boat gained in two hours hard pulling was more than once lost in a fourth of the time, and that almost within hail of the ship she was drawn back again by opposing currents. It was evident that the men were almost exhausted from such a continuance of exertion, and when the flood-tide began to make against them, though they were then within two miles of the ship, it seemed as if they should be obliged to relinquish the attempt as fruitless.

Confined by a number of small islands which could be plainly distinguished at no great distance from each other, the tides and currents ran amongst them, with almost resistless force; and the tide, as has been already mentioned, was again on the turn, before those on board the boat, though they strained every muscle, could succeed in

reaching the Snowdon. When they did come along side, no time was lost in quitting a vessel, which threatened almost every moment to fall asunder. At high water her hull had been completely submerged ; the ebb was proportionably rapid ; and as it left the vessel, the water poured out from her sides by a thousand chinks and openings, splashing into the sea around her, and covering her from stem to stern with a multitude of little rills, like the commencement of a heavy thaw after frost.

When the ships company had got into the boat it was discovered that the purser was not amongst them. "Where is the purser !" shouted the captain. "Hollo there ! The boat is just going off."

"Looking after his gold, I'll warrant him," answered a gruff voice, "though it will not buy much where we are going."

The captain's calls brought the purser on deck, buttoning up his coat, and holding his hands on his pockets ; his foot slid on the slippery boards as he drew near the gang-

way. He staggered, and in his endeavour to save himself from falling, removed his hands from his pockets to catch a rope, and by so doing let some of his treasure escape, which rolled towards the scupper at the gangway. He made a hurried effort to overtake the rolling money, lost his balance, and falling headlong overboard between the boat and the ship's side, went down like a stone."

"Ay, there he and his gold go to the bottom together," said the same voice. The captain looked at Manning, who only answered, "No power on earth can save a man with that weight in his pockets. A sixteen pounder could not do the thing more effectually."

"He is gone! poor fellow," answered the captain. "We can do nothing for him, and our time is precious. We have so little room for provision in this boat, that it is indispensable that we should get the other before the Snowdon goes to pieces. Push off."

The command was instantly obeyed, and they got clear of the rocks notwithstanding the dangerous surf which broke upon them. They had not got very far when a human creature seemed to start up from the deep, and borne by the tide came floating towards them (the head and shoulders out of water), with a sort of dancing motion turning first on the one side, and then on the other, according to the movement of the waves.

“And who is that?” demanded the captain. “I did not know that we had lost any of our people.”

“A native Portuguese, who would have sunk us all this morning, in his endeavours to get into the boat, had I not struck him off,” answered Manning.

“You did well and wisely, Manning; the loss of this boat, would have been the loss of every soul belonging to the *Snowdon*.”

“Ay, ay, sir,” answered the helmsman. “without that, we would all have been, where our poor purser is now.”

Captain Landless gave his officer the

praise which he thought due, to an act which had not only saved the passengers in the boat, but perhaps the ship's company, though he deeply felt the cruelty of the circumstances which had made such a sacrifice necessary ; and as he looked on the unclosed eyes, and dangling arms, floated by the undulation of the waves, of the awful spectacle before him, gratitude for the preservation of so many lives, could alone reconcile his mind to the price paid. Manning, in the steady consciousness of duty, looked on the fearful object but as the seal of its performance. The seamen, accustomed to the Hoogly, were too much familiarized with scenes of the kind to let this make any impression, some of them even passed coarse jokes on the subject, the colour of the skin, causing them to regard the sufferer with as much indifference as if he had been an animal instead of a human creature. Those who were most superstitious, regarded his appearance at that moment as an unlucky omen for them, and in a voice not to

be heard by their officers, related their own experience upon such subjects.

They reached the island, however, in safety, though not until they had seen their deserted vessel go down at one plunge ; the wind had risen and caused a greater swell over the rocks, which lifted her from her resting-point, and finished the catastrophe. All hope of further aid was now at an end, and Captain Landless was doubly provoked with the conduct of the crew of the jolly-boat, who had not come to his assistance when they were most wanted.

It was dark long before they reached their little landing-place, to which they were directed by a fire made of dry brush-wood, kindled by those on shore, who had anxiously looked out for their approach.

“ Where is the jolly-boat and her crew ? ” demanded the captain, as soon as he came within hail of those on shore.

“ Left the island an hour before dark,” answered Dr. M’Alpin, “ neither bribe

nor entreaty of ours could make them go sooner."

"The Snowdon has gone to the bottom, and their departure now can be but of little use; they are more likely to lose the boat and their own lives, than be of any service to us," answered Captain Landless.

"That creature did not come out of the water for nothing," whispered one of the sailors to his next neighbour.

"Let the fire be kept up all night," said the captain, "to guide them to the landing-place."

The captain as soon as he set his foot on shore, ordered a general survey of whatever had been brought from the ship, and saw with vexation and anger, the large quantity of useless articles (at least, useless in their present circumstances), which had been taken in place of provisions and fishing-tackle.

In the confusion which had attended their embarkation, many had seized upon articles of their own particular calling; and

it was but in the solitary instance of the cook, who had not forgotten his largest kettle, and perhaps the butcher who had taken his knife and hatchet with him, that such an instinct proved useful. Mrs. Cheapstow's ayah had seized upon her mistress's dressing-glass, which she had brought tied up in her chudder,* and Mirza had got his master's boot-jacks stuck into his sash. Cussim Ali's inability to take any thing, had perhaps been the means of preserving unimpaired his claims to superior thought and consideration. The soldiers and their wives had also brought a variety of odd articles, little available to their present wants.

"What have we here," said the captain, examining a heterogeneous mass of things which could scarcely have been expected to be found on a desert island. "Who has brought all this trumpery, and occupied space which should have been put to better purpose?"

"The native servants," answered the cap-

* Chudder—drapery for the head.

tain's servant, "when once they got a thing in their grasp, there was no making them quit hold, and I doubt there is plunder from between decks amongst the soldiers and their wives, which is of as little use. I have brought your boat-cloak, sir, and your gun—your powder and shot, your shark-hooks and fishing-lines, sir."

"That's a good fellow," answered his master, "these are the things we want. Now, steward, see that our provisions are stowed in one place, and a strict watch kept over them; and in the mean time serve out a small proportion for supper, for those who have had no other food this day."

Cussim Ali guessed the subject of conversation, and hastened to inform his master in Hindostanee, that he had observed a large hole in the rocks, quite dry, and above the water-mark, which would serve the captain sahib for a godown* to keep the "dinner things" from rain if any came.

"A good thought, my black friend," said

* Godown—storehouse.

the captain, when the information was translated to him. "Here, my lads, take torches, examine the cavern, and if it be, what he says, let the provisions be stowed there instantly;" and he added in a low voice to the doctor, "and it will be easier to keep them there, too, from light fingers."

All hands set to work, the cavern was found as Cussim had described it, and the things were removed; the cook proceeded to prepare supper, which consisted of a large kettle of boiled rice, with a few slices of fat ham cut down into it, to give it a relish.

Contrary to his usual habits, Colonel Cheapstow found his supper better than any thing he had tasted for a great many months. The provision was served out to every individual in exact measure, allowing half as much for the children as for the grown persons; and afterwards a small portion of brandy-and-water was in like manner distributed.

This sustenance, slender as it was, served to raise the drooping spirits of the poor islanders, and having lighted several fires to counteract as much as possible the effects of the night air, they prepared to sleep. Dr. M'Alpin and Colonel Cheapstow had, while daylight lasted, collected a quantity of dry grass, and made a kind of couch for Mrs. Cheapstow, who overcome with fatigue and the agitation she had suffered, was no longer able to sit up.

Captain Landless, fertile in expedients, ordered the men to bring up the mainsail and oars from the longboat, with which he constructed a sort of tent to shield her from the weather. Mrs. Cheapstow and her ayah occupied one end of the frail dwelling, Colonel Cheapstow and the doctor the other; while Cussim Ali and Mirza, like mice, hid themselves in the folds of the sail which hung on the ground. The colonel and Dr. M'Alpin, as soon as they found that they were to be lodged in the tent, made over

their boat-cloaks for the use of the women and children, who had no other canopy than the cope of heaven.

Captain Landless and his officers, accustomed to change of place and climate, took upon themselves the duty of sentries, and stretched themselves down, all round the tent.

Nothing occurred to disturb their repose; no noise was heard but the rushing of the waves on the rocky shore, and though Captain Landless often in the course of the night, looked out on the moonlit sea, no trace of the missing boat was to be seen. The beacon-fire had been carefully attended to, and kept burning all night, and when morning dawned without any appearance of the boat, Captain Landless gave it as his opinion, that she must either have struck upon some sunken rock, and gone to the bottom in the dark, or gained one of the other islands.

As soon as dawn commenced, every one was on foot to endeavour to provide, as

much as the nature of their circumstances permitted, for their daily wants.

Captain Landless had determined from the low state of his provisions, to issue but one spare meal a day, and every one's ingenuity was called into exertion, to supply the rest. Some of the men ranged along the shore in quest of what the tide might have thrown up, and were actually so happy as to find a barrel of salt beef, floated from the wreck. This discovery gave them spirits to go through with the fatigues of their search, though the rocks were so sharp, that many had their shoes cut through—a miserable prognostic of what was to come.

Captain Landless had in the mean time employed several of the men to fell a tall tree, which they set up, on the highest point of the island as a flag-staff, and tying all the neckcloths and pocket-handkerchiefs together, fastened their flag thus formed to their mast in hopes of attracting the notice of some vessel at sea.

While this was going forward, and the men occupied in different directions, the Lascars* took the opportunity of jumping into the longboat, when there was none by to prevent them, cutting her cable and pulling out to sea, in hopes of gaining some other land.

Manning was the first, as he returned to the landing-place, to discover the theft; and he snatched the gun out of Dr. M'Alpin's hand, who accompanied him, with the intention of firing on the serang.† The Lascars, aware of their danger, pulled with all their strength, and were out of his reach, before he could bring the gun to bear on them.

“The Lascars are of the caste of rogues,” said Cussim, who was following his master. “When was it that they ever lost an opportunity to run away and leave their masters in danger?”

“Our rascally Lascars,” cried Manning,

* Lascars—native seamen.

† Serang—chief of the Lascars.

running with the unwelcome intelligence to Captain Landless, "have made their escape, and carried away our longboat."

"Impossible!" said the captain; "they dare not be guilty of such an action!"

"Look there then, captain, and satisfy yourself; there they are pulling with force that nothing but a knavish action would ever make them exert."

The captain looked through the telescope, which he never quitted, and was satisfied that Manning's information was correct, by perceiving that there was not a European amongst them.

"We should have known them better, Manning," he said, "than to have put it in their power to serve us a trick of the kind. They have taken from us the only means we had of seeking for an inhabited place, or of procuring fish to eke out our spare provisions. They have, I trust not, got the mainsail."

"No," said Manning; "cowardly knaves; they were afraid to touch that, I suppose,

though there were only the women there at the time."

"At all events," said the doctor, who by this time joined them, "let us take the comfort our situation will admit: by their departure we have fewer mouths to feed, and the soldiers have lighted on a prize on the shore—a cask of salt provisions."

"That's lucky," said the captain; "we must keep a good look out, Manning, perhaps the next flood may bring us something of the same kind."

Towards evening a sail was seen on the horizon; but notwithstanding the signals from the flag-staff, and all the smoke they could raise, the strange sail stood on without taking any notice of their endeavours.

"At any rate, we are not out of the course of ships," said the doctor. "Let us take comfort from that, Captain Landless; to-morrow, who knows but what we may be more fortunate?"

In the evening the daily meal was again cooked, and dispositions made for passing

the night as before. Cussim Ali, fortunately, found a small fish in a pool, which he broiled on the coals for himself; being too good a Mussulman to allow hunger even to be the cause of his eating rice, that had been polluted by the forbidden ham. Mrs. Cheapstow's ayah was not so scrupulous, though she declared her intention of absolving herself from the crime, and buying back her caste, if ever she lived to return to Bengal.

The next day, and several following, past in the same manner. Many sails were seen, but one after another passed without taking the slightest notice of their repeated signals, probably thinking that the smoke which they sent up, was only made by fishermen cooking on the shore.

Their shoes in a short time were cut to pieces by the sharpness of the coral rocks, and their feet so lacerated and swelled, that dispirited by repeated disappointments, when a ship was seen, very few had spirits to climb to the flag-staff to make the requi-

site signals. Even fishing, more necessary as it was every day, by the consumption of their provisions, became an insupportable task, and nothing but Captain Landless's threat to cut off the allowance of those who did not make the exertion, induced many to bear the torment of the salt water on their excoriated feet.

Their prospects every day became darker and more hopeless, and they began to dread that fear of the currents running amongst those islands, would for ever prevent ships from approaching them. Mrs. Cheapstow had, in the commencement, consoled herself by observing, that her husband's health was visibly amended, and the hope that their residence on the island would not be of very long continuance. Many were of opinion that the lascars, who were well acquainted with the bay, would make the mainland, and by giving information of the wreck of the *Snowdon*, be the means of sending some vessel to the assistance of her crew, but as day after day passed, the expectation died away. Each

tried to conceal his apprehension from the other, and to talk of hopes which were no longer felt.

Three weeks of torturing suspense had now passed away, and their scanty provisions were almost expended, when one evening, after having made several signals which they believed to have passed without notice, they were surprised by the welcome appearance of a boat pulling round the wooded corner of their island to their little landing-place.

"Thank God!" said Colonel and Mrs. Cheapstow in a breath.

"God be praised!" exclaimed the doctor.

Every one crowded down to the pier to greet the new arrivals. They found that the boat was commanded by a European lad, and manned by lascars, and that she belonged to a "country ship," one of the trading vessels between Gangam and Acheen. "Captain Hawser," he said, "had seen their flag, and knowing that the island was uninhabited, had sent him to bring off as many as their boat could contain, and thinking

that they might be in want he had also sent rice and brandy."

"Let the women and children go first, as before," said Captain Landless, "with Colonel Cheapstow, Dr. M'Alpin, and their servants—and I will thank you, young man, to make Captain Landless's compliments, of the Honourable Company's late ship, Snowdon, to Captain Hawser, and say how much I am indebted to his humane attention, and I trust he will make our distresses known to the proper authorities in the first port he may reach."

"Depend upon us for that," said Colonel Cheapstow and the doctor, both speaking together—"if money can procure a vessel, she shall be sent without losing an hour."

"We shall do what we can to get the boat sent back for you, sir, when we reach the ship," said the lad.

"Thank you, my good friend," answered Captain Landless—"I shall be glad to send off several of my people who have suffered in their feet; but it is impossible for me to

leave the island while a man remains upon it."

"Farewell, my brave friend," said the doctor, shaking hands with Captain Landless, "I trust we shall yet meet in the land o' cakes. Fare ye well, Manning, and if government has not a ship to send for you, I will hire one and send it myself, I give you my word."

Fellowship in suffering had made Colonel Cheapstow and Dr. M'Alpin personally acquainted with every man on the island, and they both deposited orders on Calcutta to a considerable amount in the hands of Captain Landless, for the use of his ship's company, who greeted the departure of the boats with loud cheers, waving their hats, and wishing a prosperous voyage to those on board.

When those who were thus unexpectedly released from their almost hopeless captivity had reached the "Eastern Star," and that Captain Hawser was made acquainted with the necessities of those on shore, though his small vessel did not admit of his receiving many

more passengers, he generously freighted the boat and sent her to the island a second time, with rice, sail-cloth, hatchets, saws, hammers, nails, and a part of his own little provisions, that they might be enabled to construct a hut to shelter them from the weather. Fortunately no rain had fallen during their stay on the island; but such drought could not be expected much longer.

The *Eastern Star* was laid-to, so near the island, that her boat went and returned in a fourth part of the time which had been consumed by those from the unfortunate *Snowdon*; on her second return she brought Mr. Clairville, and a few of the men whose feet were in a deplorable condition. Captain Hawser gave up his own cabin to Mrs. Cheapstow, and did every thing which circumstances would permit during the three days they were in reaching Gangam, for the comfort of his half-famished passengers.

There was no other vessel fit for sea at the time the *Eastern Star* reached the port;

but Colonel Cheapstow represented the urgent necessity of those he had left on the island, with such force, that she was taken up on account of government for this service, and Captain Hawser employed men to work night and day in unloading her and getting the stores on board requisite for so many Europeans. The good doctor, in conformity to his promise, spared neither trouble nor expense in procuring whatever could be useful. Mrs. Cheapstow employed all the durzies at the place in making up as much linen as the time would admit, and every British resident made a contribution from their wardrobes for the use of those who were literally in rags. It was determined that the *Eastern Star* should take the islanders back to Calcutta, and that as soon as another vessel could be got ready for their transport, the soldiers' wives and children should be sent there also.

When all these arrangements were effected, Colonel and Mrs. Cheapstow, and the doctor, had leisure to think of them-

selves and their own wants. They had been, the moment their distressed situation was known, most kindly received into the house of an old resident at Gangam, where they only proposed to remain long enough to recover their fatigues, recruit their wasted strength, and get what was indispensably necessary before they proceeded *dawk** along the coast to Madras, as the season was so far advanced, that they preferred sailing from that port to Europe, to returning again to Calcutta.

Both the doctor and Colonel Cheapstow left substantial tokens of their gratitude with Captain Hawser at parting. He was the bearer of letters from them to Captain Landless, announcing the arrangements which had been made, and repeating their feelings of gratitude to him, and friendly interest in their fellow-sufferers. Dr. M'Alpin, in writing to Mr. Manning, begged that he would draw whatever money he required while in Calcutta out of the hands of his agent, whose

* *Dawk*—post.

address he enclosed; and at the end of three days from that on which they entered the port, they had the satisfaction to see the Eastern Star weigh anchor and depart, better provided with food and wearables, than could possibly have been expected in so short a time.

Having such a long land journey to perform, Dr. M'Alpin judged it prudent for Colonel Cheapstow to keep perfectly quiet; and having taken upon himself to make the requisite preparations, he trusted that his friend would be able to undergo the fatigue without material injury. Several days must elapse before the dawk could be laid, and in the mean time he resolved to gratify himself by paying a visit to the celebrated temple of Jaghurnaut.

CHAPTER IX.

——— Th' ascending pile
Stood fixt her stately height : and strait the doors
Op'ning their brazen folds, discover wide
Within, her ample spaces, o'er the smooth
And level pavement : from the arched roof,
Pendent by subtle magie, many a row
Of starry lamps, and blazing cressets, fed
With naphtha and asphaltus, yielded light
As from a sky.

MILTON.

WHEN Dr. M'Alpin arrived at the temple famous over India for its antiquity and unrivalled splendour, he stood dumb with wonder on beholding such an extraordinary structure, and looked from the roof to the base, as if he almost doubted that

man's labour was capable of accomplishing such a work.

The temple, enclosed by two courts of surprising extent, surrounded by high walls, and pillared verandas round their interior, stands on an immense platform of solid rock: an enormous mass of granite has been, by incredible labour, cut down to an exact level a few feet above the ground for the foundation of this gigantic work. The great pyramid, in stupendous altitude, rears itself gray with the tints of time, in the midst of this enclosure. The centre pyramid over the grand entrance, and the whole face of the temple, is wrought in endless sculpture as far as the eye can reach.

It is impossible by words to give an idea of the imposing magnitude of this mass of building; to show how inadequate description must be, it is sufficient to mention that at a hundred and fifty feet from the ground, the greatest height to which measurement has yet extended, each single stone used in the building has been found to con-

sist of granite blocks of a thousand square feet. The riches of this temple which are reputed to be incalculable, have never been exposed to European eyes, since a Frenchman in the disguise of a native performing penance, contrived to effect an entrance into the temple, and in the night stole a ruby of immense value, one of the eyes of the idol.

Nothing can be more hideous than this frightfully misshapen image of Jaghurnaut, which from superstitious reasons was hewn entire out of a log of wood, which the Brahmins reported to have been by miraculous means landed on their coast.

The doctor, in surveying the place, recognised at a little distance a Brahmin whom he had formerly known at Benares. The regular and finely-proportioned features of this man's face had altogether a lofty and contemplative character, which accorded well with the dignified carriage of his body ; his age might be about thirty-six. His forehead and nose were marked down the centre

with nicely-drawn lines of yellow paint, which denoted the caste to which he belonged; his bosom was marked with the same sign, and round his neck hung his brahminee beads, and a small linked gold chain. His dress consisted merely of a piece of white cotton with red ends, passed two or three times round his waist, and hanging down to the knee; with a muslin jacket tight to his shape, and a snow-white turban of the same material.

When Dr. M'Alpin approached, he bent his head in two or three respectful salaams. "The sahib is welcome," he said, speaking in Hindostanee. "We are happy to see him in this place."

The doctor raised his hat after the manner of European salutation; a compliment to which natives acquainted with European manners, are generally very sensible.

"I am happy to see you in health, Krishen," he said; "and much as I have seen of your building in this country, I

never have seen any thing like this—the interior must be equal to the exterior of such a place.”

“The sahib would think so, if he could see its splendour with his own eyes—the gold and the silver and the jewels making the night seem like day; and the golden lamps like the stars in the firmament, and the smoke of incense like the clouds of heaven. But the sahib has come in a good time, for to-morrow is the beginning of our great days—the pilgrims will come in, and Jaghurnaut will ride out in his car.”

“If to-morrow is the great procession of the pilgrims, Krishen, you could perhaps contrive to let me see the temple. I know that it is not permitted for any one but a Hindoo, by your laws to enter there; still, I know that you are above the belief in all the rules which have been made for the vulgar.”

“I would do it for the sahib,” answered the Hindoo, “knowing that he has the wisdom and learning of a Brahmin, but my

brothers would look upon me with evil eyes."

"You do not believe that the log of wood set up by man's hands is God?" said the doctor. "I am well enough acquainted with your Shasters to know that they say 'God has no likeness.'"

"They are the words of truth," answered the Brahmin, "and were written for our caste; but the ignorant who cannot imagine what their eyes have not seen, must have a form to look upon."

The doctor felt the uselessness of arguing with a Brahmin on such a subject; he knew that the man before him considered his own soul, as well as all those of his privileged caste, so many sparks of the divine essence, to be "reabsorbed into the ocean of eternal rest," when they had merited bliss by their lives, or by many transmigrations been cleansed from the sins they had contracted in their mortal pilgrimage.

Dr. M'Alpin could not look upon the surprising effects of man's patient industry

now before him, without something of the overwhelming impression, which overpowers the mind in the contemplation of the grand features of nature. Its magnitude, its elevation, its durability, all joined to heighten the effect, and disposed his mind to consider the might which is in the arm of fallen man, under the direction of his reasoning and inventive faculties, to produce a work so far beyond his apparent strength and duration on earth. A monument reared by the children of a day, which seemed destined to last to the end of time!—if his heart for a moment swelled with a proud thought on the power of the spirit of man, it died within him, and his head sunk on his breast, when the object for which such a temple had been reared, presented itself to his mind. Can man imagine such lofty devices for such an end? Can he whose thoughts seem ready to aspire to heaven—who works not for an hour or for a day, but who lays a foundation, solid as the mountains—broad as their base—and who rears a structure upon it, like them,

capable of defying all changes of weather, and to stand against time, bow down before an idol of his own formation?

The doctor turned from the temple to consider a pyramid near it, not less impressive, entirely formed of the skulls of pilgrims, who, worn out with fatigue, and reduced to the last degree of misery and poverty, had breathed their last there. This ghastly weather-bleached heap rose in white contrast to the dark mass by which it was caused. "Would that these dry bones could speak," said the doctor; "would that these tenantless jaws had a tongue to warn the infatuated benighted multitude from their way!"

"It is a fine sight," said the Brahmin, looking at the bare pyramid of what had once been human heads. "All these children of Adam died here for the honour of Jaghurnaut."

The doctor turned to regard the speaker as if he was looking on him for the first time, surprised that two human creatures could think and feel so differently on the

same subject. He eyed him for a moment as if his glance would say—"Are you not flesh—are you not blood—are you not sensible of human misery, and degradation, and suffering? But it was but for the first moment of lacerated feeling that such thoughts occupied his mind. He well knew that the magic wand of the bloody monster Superstition had changed the most revolting scenes into offerings of pride and pleasure in the eyes of millions of his race. Beyond the spot where they stood, extended a valley, filled with uncollected fragments of what had been lately, living, moving, sentient creatures, amongst which jackals glided even in the light of the sun, and birds of prey fought.

"What is that?" said the doctor, listening to what seemed to him like a faint shriek.

"Nothing," said the Brahmin. "Some bird attacking a man before he is dead."

"God be merciful to us!" exclaimed the doctor, rushing forward, for his perfect ac-

quaintance with native apathy rather heightened than subdued his irritable feelings. At no great distance he discovered a miserable native (lying on the ground where he had been abandoned to die) making feeble efforts to keep off the vultures who gathered round him, and bleeding from the wound which had caused his shriek. At the appearance of a living man, the sullen troop rose, heavily flapping their black wings, and again alighted on a rock at a little distance, where they remained in watchful expectation, stretching their red, bare necks.

Dr. M'Alpin to his great surprise found, that the wretched sufferer, was no other than his own mate bearer, from whom he had parted at Sangor ; his present extreme weakness he found proceeded more from exhaustion than illness, and he was anxious to make an effort for him which he hoped might be successful. The doctor knew that it was vain to expect that the bearers who had brought him to Jaghurnaut would lose their caste by rendering assistance to

any one in such circumstances. While he was considering in great anxiety what it was possible for him to do, some pariahs* arrived to deposit the body of a man already dead, and money easily engaged them in the service of the living. He made them carry the poor creature into the nearest shady spot, as it was not possible to take him into a house, for no native would pollute his dwelling by suffering such a guest to enter it.

Fortunately the doctor found Cussim Ali, with his palanquin-bearers, who knowing his master's ways, was willing enough to assist him in any thing that would not endanger his caste, and at his bidding ran to procure food for Manoort. There were abundance of stalls at no great distance, where provisions might be obtained for those who had money to purchase it; but the owners, hardened to the fearful spectacle of human misery because they were accus-

* Pariahs—outcasts employed in the most menial offices.

tomed to it at the time of pilgrimage, would not give to any one, without first receiving its full value, a single, grain of rice.

The doctor took the food from the hands of Cussim Ali, and with his own, gave it in the proportion he deemed expedient to the sufferer, who, considering the place from which he had been taken, and the hands which had carried him there, had no right to reject food even from a European.

Manoorut opened his eyes and seemed to recognise his master as he put a particle into his mouth; but though unable to speak, he swallowed his food.

A week before the poor bearer would have died any death that could have been offered to him rather than to have defiled himself by receiving food from a hand of lower caste; though his master was in all other respects, in his eyes, an object to be honoured and almost worshipped, (for he had often called him "His God,") yet in this one particular he considered him as on a level with dogs, and had his "caste not been

gone," by his misfortunes, he would have shut his teeth against the offered sustenance.

The doctor knew the feelings of those who were about him, and told them "that in his profession, he had a right to give medicine even with his own hand, and that many men of the first caste, might take what he had touched." The Brahmin remained at a distance sufficient to prevent his hearing what was said,—he would not even run the risk of respiring the air polluted by a creature in Manoorut's circumstances. Cussim Ali, who hated the whole of his race with genuine Mussulman hatred, did not lose so good an opportunity of declaring his opinion very freely upon the proceedings of the class to which he belonged.

"This is the work of the Brahmins, sahib; this is their good work. I know that though Manoorut left his money with his family, when we came down the river, he had

enough to bring him here, if they had not robbed him. Every pilgrim before he comes into the town of Jaghurnaut must pay a tax, and another to the Brahmins before they can enter the temple. You know, sahib, if many of the poor Hindoos, who come from the farthest end of India, can bear that, after they have eaten all their money on the road. Nine days after, when this uproar is passed, there will be more dead round this pagoda than if a battle had been fought on the ground."

"I know," answered his master, "that for time immemorial, every pilgrim entering the town of Jaghurnaut paid a tax to the Rajah," and he continued speaking to himself as he often did, in English, "which I fear is continued by our government, I have heard people say, for the intention of decreasing the influx of pilgrims.—And what better," he said, turning to Cussim Ali, and again speaking in Hindostanee, "is your

great festival in honour of Hassan and Hussein, when you go about beating your breasts for three nights, and scaring sleep from the world? Are not you as glad to draw blood, and to mark your road with dead, in honour of them, as the Hindoos can be for Jaghurnaut?"

"Oh, there is a great difference, sahib," said the Mussulman, earnestly though respectfully: "Hassan and Hussein were the grandsons of *our* prophet, and great warriors, and fought many a battle, and it is well that their name should be kept up, and it is honourable that men should die for them, but for that log of wood, Jaghurnaut?—the Hindoos are fools, and of the caste of fools, to believe that any man can get good by dying here—but for us—who die fighting with our swords in our hands—Mahomet has said, that the gates of Paradise are open."

Dr. M'Alpin found that his bearer was not at that time likely to increase the num-

ber of victims; he had regained so much of the use of speech as to utter a few words of thanks to his master, who bribed people to carry him to the house of an acquaintance, Lieutenant Armstrong, whom he found was in command of the guard, sent to preserve order during the time of pilgrimage.

At his house the doctor resolved to pass the night, as he would never again have an opportunity of witnessing the tremendous scene which was next day to be enacted, and in the morning his friend accompanied him upon his elephant, taking care to keep clear of the living stream, which with almost as much fury as the Ganges when it has burst its banks, poured into the grand portal of the vast enclosure. Many of those whom long travel and famine had exhausted, borne down by the crowd, were crushed to atoms under the regardless feet of the thronging multitude, all struggling forward as earnestly as if eternity hung upon a point of time.

From a hundred and fifty to two hundred thousand persons were there—all animated by the same desire—all rushing forward to the same object, many of them having come from distant provinces, having borne hunger and thirst, fatigue and exposure in their fiercest extremes, and many too, having added to those natural evils, instruments of torture and varieties of penance, which only Hindoos could devise.

It was impossible to distinguish particular sounds, but the aggregate mass of sound, if it is allowable to use such an expression, the voice of this mighty congregation swelled like the chafing of ocean, and rose and fell with the undulation of the atmosphere, the tread of their feet forming a deep, low, hollow accompaniment resembling the long roll of distant thunder. That temple, like the grave, to which it conducted so many, swallowed up the living stream. There they were lost to the eye, and there too, like the

grave, all were equal; from the moment they had passed under the portal, there was no distinction of caste or of rank, the prince and the beggar, the Brahmin and the pariah, were equal. Let sages say how it is that man, in the lowest depths of his degradation, or in the utmost height of his pride's inflation, still feels that there is a natural equality which circumstances cannot alter, and that miserable and erroneous as his ideas are, he no sooner realizes to himself a supreme presence, than he falls even in his own eyes to the level of his fellows.

“ This is no pleasant duty,” said Mr. Armstrong, “ particularly when the idol commences his procession. It has now been my lot to be here twice, and I hope it may never occur again.”

“ The scene is horrid, in every sense of the word,” replied Dr. M'Alpin; “ yet being on the spot one feels curious to see even such an enormity.”

When the stupendous car, on which the idol was placed, issued from the massy portal, a shout burst from the eager multitude, loud, deep, and reiterated. Dragged by a thousand ready hands, the ponderous machine slowly moved on amidst the triumphant shouts of frantic worshippers, and the deeper clamour of cymbals, conches, and tom-toms.* The car was constructed upon an enormous framework of strong beams, firmly fastened upon a number of broad low wheels. On this foundation five stages rose in regular succession—these stages, which were covered with coloured silk, gilding, and foil, were decorated with talc chattas, flags, chouries, and flowers, and appropriated to the musicians and dancers, who to the number of several hundreds loaded the car, making the greatest noise which their voices and instruments could possibly effect.

On the pinnacle of the car, or rather pyra-

* Tom-toms—drums.

mid, was placed the hideous misshapen figure of Jaghurnaut, radiant with jewels, which, under the rays of a bright sun, dazzled the eyes of his fanatic worshippers. The shouting of the multitude, and the creaking of the wheels, stifled the groans and shrieks, if there were any, uttered by those whom accident, design, or zeal, had thrown under the wheels of the weighty machine, and it was not until the procession, and the train which followed it, had rolled on, that it was possible to distinguish that it had left fragments on the red earth, which did not belong to it, and which none regarded.

This then was idolatry in its visible form, and these were its real fruits, and this was the appalling worship upheld by those who desired to give the people something tangible and visible within their grasp, conceiving it impossible for them to comprehend infinity.

It was not until the crowd had in some degree given way, that Dr. M'Alpin and

his friend could move from the spot, where they had first posted themselves to witness this extraordinary scene, which the continued noise in the distance warned them was still going forward in all its vigour. The doctor begged Mr. Armstrong to permit his poor Manoorut to stay with his bearers until he should be sufficiently recovered to return to his own home, and he took care before quitting Mr. Armstrong's house the next day, to leave money sufficient for that purpose.

When Dr. M'Alpin rejoined Colonel and Mrs. Cheapstow at Gangam, he found that the dawk was laid, and every thing in readiness for their commencing their journey next evening. Their cavalcade would be large, as they had no other means of conveying Cussim Ali, Mirza, and the ayah, but by dawk also. A few indispensable requisites constituted all their baggage,

which also they were obliged to transport by relays of bangy-wallahs.*

* Bangy-wallahs—those who run post with light baggage suspended from their shoulders.

CHAPTER X.

The quality of mercy is not strained :
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath. It is twice blessed :
It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes.

SHAKSPEARE.

THE bearers had been regularly laid, and our friends arrived at Madras without interruption, though greatly fatigued with so long and rapid a journey. They went straight to the house of Colonel Marsden on Choultry plain, who being an old friend of Colonel Cheapstow's, upon hearing of his distress, had written to Gangam to say, that

his house at Madras was very much at Colonel and Mrs. Cheapstow's service, though he regretted that duty obliged him to be absent at the time. This Mrs. Cheapstow would have been sorry for in other circumstances; but at present, when she had every thing to get for such a voyage, and Colonel Cheapstow was so unequal to any exertion, she felt she would be more at liberty without even the company of their host. He had kindly left his carriage for her use, so that she could commence operations without loss of time.

The doctor's first object was to secure their passage in the Ruthven Castle, a fine new ship then lying in the roads, which his agent had particularly recommended, and he was fortunate enough to procure exactly the same accommodation as they had formerly had in the Snowdon. He doubly rejoiced in this circumstance, as the prospect

of being obliged to put up with a secondary cabin, while those of less standing might be in the first, had in the morning harassed Colonel Cheapstow. Now the certainty that he would not only be comfortably accommodated, but according to his rank, the good doctor hoped would produce a very favourable effect, and he hastened back with the satisfactory intelligence.

On the island the colonel had valiantly endured every privation without murmur or complaint, and at Ganjam he had shown himself only anxious to promote the comfort of those who had been his brethren in misfortune. Now the case was different; there were no longer urgent claims upon the generosity of his heart, he was going amongst strangers, and few things could have reconciled him to occupying a secondary place where he felt himself entitled to the first.

Luckily the vessel was not to sail for ten

or fourteen days, so that there would be time to replace some of their losses upon the Andamans, and their wants were no sooner known at Madras than the house was filled with native merchants, bringing bales of goods of every description, even of precious stones, which they spread out on the floor in glittering array, whilst they squatted themselves in the midst of their treasures, holding them up and chattering like monkeys. Those accustomed to see the natives of Hindostan, could not help being struck with the feeble and diminutive appearance of the people of the coast; their heads, the craniologists remark, have a greater resemblance in conformation to that of the monkey than any others of the human race.

“Have you got fine sewing cotton?” demanded Mrs. Cheapstow, of a pedler who was eagerly displaying his small wares.

“Fine sewing cotton not got, but best shoe-blackening got,” answered the man, at

the same time holding up a cake, as if he thought it a perfect substitute for the article required. "Best Europe writing-paper got—carpenter's rulers got—best 'Eau de luce,' got—Hervey's sauce got—all gentlemens take for beef-estake—Smyth and Nephew's lavender-water got—best book-muslin got.—Take, ma'am, take—something take!" he continued earnestly, stretching out the muslin, and canooing forward on his heels without getting up. "Good muslin, ma'am, fine muslin, ma'am; I cheap price sell,—take—"

"And what is the price of this?" said Mrs. Cheapstow, examining the muslin which she held in her hand.

The native as usual demanded three times as much as he intended to take; wisely considering that as Mrs. Cheapstow was in haste, she would not have much time to waste in making a reasonable purchase.

“ Ah, you great rogue,” said Mrs. Cheapstow, dropping the muslin.

“ No, ma’am, I not one great rogue ; what ma’am give, that I take,” said he, with an expression which would indicate that he thought himself wise in taking advantage of the folly of those with whom he had to deal. “ Take muslin, ma’am, take !”

“ But it is not worked,” said Mrs. Cheapstow.

“ Take, ma’am, take—so good muslin—can get work at Lower Orphan’s school.”

“ He is right, my dear,” said Colonel Cheapstow. “ I have heard that they do that sort of work beautifully ; and since I cannot go with you, I am sure M’Alpin will accompany you this evening. I am afraid of your going by yourself, the Madras horses are not nearly so well broken in as ours in Bengal.”

The muslin was purchased, to the great

delight of the pedler, who received about twice as much for it as it was worth, and in the evening, after the sea-breeze had set in, Dr. M'Alpin accompanied Mrs. Cheapstow to the Lower Orphan school, where she wished to have this muslin worked.

When they arrived at the house, they were shown into a large hall where a number of girls were at work under the superintendence of the matron Mrs. Patch. Mrs. Cheapstow stated her wishes, and the mistress called up several of the girls, one after another to show the works they had in hand. They were all country-born, the children of soldiers and sailors, who having lost their parents, and being without provision or friends, were maintained in this institution until they could be married or otherwise provided for.

Mrs. Cheapstow spoke to many of the girls, but with few exceptions found them perfectly ignorant, and in many cases hardly

able to return an intelligible answer in English. "You have an immense establishment here," she observed, addressing the school-mistress, "what do you do with all these girls?"

"Oh, madam, we marry them, and sometimes when European ladies require it, we let them go out as ayahs, though it is not always that that answers well, either for the mistress or the servant."

"But who do you marry them to?" asked Mrs. Cheapstow.

"Sometimes, madam, to soldiers of the European regiments, and sometimes to country-born men in the bazar.

"But how have they an opportunity of becoming acquainted with such people?"

"Oh, madam, much acquaintance is not necessary. When a man has declared his intention to take a wife, the governors permit him to come here, and choose in my presence, and if the girl does not object,

which is not very common, they are married directly."

"Eleonora," said Mrs. Patch, calling to a girl, who sat with her back to Mrs. Cheapstow, "bring your work here, and show it to this lady."

The girl rose to do as she was bid, and Mrs. Cheapstow saw with surprise, a fair and beautiful European, though extremely pale. She coloured as she drew near, and handed her work for the stranger's inspection.

"How long have you been here?" inquired Mrs. Cheapstow.

"Fourteen years, madam."

"And what is your name?"

"Eleonora, madam."

"Yes, that is your christian name, but what is your surname? Eleonora what?"

"I do not know," answered the girl, colouring more deeply. "I never had another name."

Mrs. Patch was occupied in giving orders, and despatching messengers to other parts of the house for patterns and work, so that Mrs. Cheapstow continued her questions without interruption.

“That is extraordinary; and you speak English so well.”

“I think, madam, I spoke English when I came here, and I have always liked to learn it.”

“But do you then know any thing of your parents? Do you know why you came here?”

“I have been told, madam, that I was brought here from the barrack-room of a European soldier who died in the fort.”

“Was he your father?”

“I do not know madam, but I think not.”

“What reason have you to think so? Do not be afraid—tell me all you know,” said Mrs. Cheapstow, kindly; “Perhaps I can serve you.”

The girl looked round as if to ascertain that there was no one belonging to the house within hearing, and then said, "I think, madam, I recollect a gentleman whom I used to call papa, and a lady who was my mamma, and I think the lady died. I have some recollection of seeing her lie quite still, and that I cried very bitterly, and some one took me away, but I do not know how; and there was some one too, whom I used to call Joe, but I do not know any thing more. Mrs. Patch used to be angry, when I said any thing about it; and so now I have given up speaking, though I cannot help thinking; and she calls me proud, and all the girls call me proud, and they used to say that Joe was my father's name, but I do not think so."

"And are you happy here?" asked Mrs. Cheapstow, who felt herself deeply interested in so singular a situation.

"Oh no, madam, I am very miserable."

"How? What makes you so? You have

always been brought up here ever since you can recollect, and you have all you can want. What makes you unhappy?"

"I dare not tell you, madam," said Eleonora, glancing timidly towards Dr. M'Alpin, who had listened attentively to all she had been saying.

"I like your work very much," said Mrs. Cheapstow; "stay with it here, while I speak to your mistress."

Mrs. Cheapstow before proceeding further was resolved to have a little conversation with Mrs. Patch, and she left Eleonora with the doctor, who continued to talk with her, and who was greatly pleased with the good sense of her answers, and the simplicity of her manners.

"That is a European girl," said Mrs. Cheapstow to the schoolmistress.

"Yes, poor thing," was the answer.

"She seems a sensible, good, well-behaved young creature."

“Yes, poor thing,” was again the answer.

“That being the case, why do you speak of her with pity?”

“Because, madam, her lot in life has not been the most fortunate, and is not likely to be so.”

“Not by any fault of hers?” said Mrs. Cheapstow.

“No, certainly, poor thing, far from it; unless, indeed, pride in her situation is a fault, and I do all I can to cure her of it, though I am free to confess that it is only in one way that it has ever been troublesome to me.”

“I am interested about the girl, and I shall be obliged to you, Mrs. Patch, if you will tell me frankly all you know relative to her.”

“It’s soon done, madam, for I know but little, though I was in the house when she came into it, and from that day to this no

one has ever asked about her, except in the way of curiosity, as you are doing now, madam."

"How strange that such a child should have been so abandoned! But how did she come here?"

"Fourteen years ago, the child was brought to this house out of the barrack-room of a European soldier who died in Fort St. George, and nobody could tell any thing about him, for the king's regiment to which the man belonged had sailed out of Madras roads for Europe, the very day before this happened. It was conjectured that he brought on the illness which caused his death by hard travelling from some other place, to join the regiment for which he was one day too late. He was found dead in the barracks, and this poor thing sound asleep on a little mat by him. She was sent here as a soldier's orphan, and a pretty sweet little creature she was then, as

she is now. She was, I fancy, between two and three years old, and could not speak plain. I asked her what was her name, and she told me, 'Good little Eleonora.' I tried to find out if she knew what was her father's name, but though she spoke of her 'papa,' she did not seem to know any other name. From the child's ways, I do not think the soldier was her father. She had a habit of calling for 'Joe,' as if she was calling a servant; but I kept all that to myself, for the governors said, that she was certainly the man's child; though, as she was very pretty, she had been perhaps much noticed and indulged in the regiment; and though her clothes were fine, they were certainly torn and soiled; and they said they might have been given to her,—and at any rate you know, madam, that the soldiers' wives in this country generally dress their children much beyond their station. But let that be as it will, she has always

had manners different from the other girls, and lately I came to the truth of the matter."

"A European tailor, who came here for work, saw her, and wanted to marry her ; the man never spoke to her, but he told me, and it would have been a good marriage for any girl in this house ;—but when I proposed it to her, she was ready to go distracted ; and I found then that she thinks, and has all along thought that she is a gentleman's daughter. I tried to put the notion out of her head, for as I have already told you, madam, nobody has ever inquired after her ; and at all events if she is a gentleman's child, her father is dead, or does not want to claim her, and then it is just the same to her, as if she was not ; and I have tried much lately to put notions out of her head, which can do no good, but only hinder her establishment in life. Whenever there is any chance of any one coming

here, she pretends to be sick, and tries to keep her bed; that she may not be seen, but we have found out the trick now, and it will not do any longer. I should be sorry to see her unsuitably matched, but to refuse respectable Europeans is nonsense, in her situation. She is a good handy girl, and will be a loss to me, for she has learnt to write for me all the letters that I must write to the governors, and to keep my accounts about the work ;—but it is thought that I do not do my duty, when I do not provide for the young people, as they grow up, but keep them to be burdensome on the establishment.”

“ Her situation is much to be pitied,” said Mrs. Cheapstow. “ I feel greatly interested for her, and I should like to take her with me to Europe. I know that European ladies can take girls into their service from this school, giving proper certificates for the purpose. Will you let her go with me this evening,

and I will take care that she comes back to you at ten o'clock. I should like to see something more of her, before I come to a final resolution."

Mrs. Patch, on this assurance, agreed to the proposal, and also engaged to have the work Mrs. Cheapstow required, finished for her without loss of time.

Mrs. Cheapstow made a sign to the doctor, to whom she communicated her intentions regarding Eleonora, and having done so, left him to hear the history at his leisure from Mrs. Patch, while she called Eleonora, who had again taken up her work, and asked her, if she would like to go to Europe.

"I should like it better than any thing upon earth, madam."

"Then you shall go with me, Eleonora, and I am sure I shall have no reason to repent the step I am taking."

Eleonora stood looking at Mrs. Cheap-

stow while she was speaking, as if unable to credit what she heard. Expressions of kindness or interest were new to her ; many ladies who had come to see the work, had noticed her European complexion amongst so many others of a different hue ;—but, “ Poor creature, what will become of her !” “ I should not like to be troubled with such an attendant who would require all sorts of European accommodation.” “ I prefer an ayah who wants nothing of the kind.” “ Poor creature what is she to do !”—were the remarks which she was on such occasions accustomed to hear.

Mrs. Cheapstow enjoyed her unaffected surprise, merely because it was natural. “ Eleonora,” she said with a smile, “ what are you thinking of ?—tell me.”

“ You are not jesting with me, madam ? you are not laughing at me ?” said Eleonora, bursting into tears.

“No, my poor child, no certainly,” said Mrs. Cheapstow, kindly taking her hand. “I mean exactly what I say.”

Eleonora kissed the hand which she held, without speaking, and her benefactress, that she might have time to recover the agitation of her spirits, turned to speak with the doctor, who told her that he was more interested in that poor young creature’s forlorn situation than ever he had been in his life. “As to her birth,” he said, “there is no doubt of it—she carries the stamp of it in her face and in her sentiments, and with your leave, I would like to make a provision for her, that I do not doubt but she is entitled to.”

“My worthy friend,” answered Mrs. Cheapstow, “we will talk of all that afterwards; in the mean time I am happy that your sentiments coincide with mine, because I know they will have great weight with Cheapstow. I was in duty bound, you know,

to ask his opinion before I took this step, but we have so little time, that I must even run the risk."

Mrs. Cheapstow then said aloud to Mrs. Patch, who came forward with many curtsies to make her parting compliments: "I shall let Eleonora come back to you as I have promised at night, and stay until we have settled every thing for her remaining with me altogether. Now will you have the goodness to call her."

Eleonora made her appearance at that moment, and Dr. M'Alpin handed Mrs. Cheapstow into the carriage, and the delighted girl after her, and then seated himself opposite to them with great satisfaction, revolving in his own mind, what he would do, for a creature who seemed cast upon the protection of strangers. Her presence prevented him from speaking more with Mrs. Cheapstow on this subject, but the more he saw

and heard her, the more anxious he felt for her future welfare.

Mrs. Cheapstow, who often acted more from the feelings of her heart than the dictates of her head, was happy to find from the little conversation she had with Eleonora, that there was every probability that what she had determined upon so hastily, might turn out to her wishes. She thought she discovered a remarkable degree of truth and simplicity in the answers Eleonora made to all her questions, and was glad to find, because the character accorded with her own, that her disposition seemed candid and confiding. “ Since I have never had a child of my own,” thought Mrs. Cheapstow, “ I shall have pleasure in improving a creature like this; she seems to possess a degree of right feeling which will be sure to repay the labour.”

When they arrived at Colonel Marsden's

house, on Choultry Plain, their present home, the first thing Mrs. Cheapstow did, was to go in quest of her husband, and tell him what she had done. She recounted all she had seen, and all Mrs. Patch had told her, and ended by saying—"I took such an unaccountable fancy to the girl, from the moment I saw her, and felt such pity for her situation, when I heard from the mistress of the house, how she was circumstanced, that to save her all future trouble and vexation, I fixed the matter at once, and determined to take her to England with us."

"As your attendant you mean, no doubt?"

"I did at first, when the thought came into my head mean that, but after hearing all that I have just told you, and talking a little with herself, I changed my mind; and thought as we have no children of our own, Cheapstow, we might as well adopt this girl, who is one of the sweetest creatures I ever saw."

“ A soldier’s daughter, Mrs. Cheapstow! a common soldier’s daughter! do you propose that I should adopt a private soldier’s child as mine, or suffer you to put her on an equality with yourself? What would the world think, Mrs. Cheapstow?”

“ That you are as liberal and beneficent as you have always been.”

“ Be as beneficent and liberal-minded as you please,” answered her husband, hastily interrupting her; “ but do not propose to bring the child of such a person into our society, and to our table.”

“ But you are going upon the supposition that this girl is a soldier’s child—I am confident that she is not—when you have seen her, I am certain you will be of my opinion. You know you have always said that you could distinguish birth and blood in whatever disguise you met them.”

“ So I have,” answered the Colonel, “ and I was never yet deceived, though it is

not every pretty face which bears that stamp."

"I know your tact that way," answered his wife, "and am willing to stand by it."

Thus challenged, Colonel Cheapstow, who prided himself upon his knowledge in what constituted gentility, independently of fashion or external decoration, gave his arm to his wife and conducted her into the hall where Eleonora was sitting alone. Her dress was plain white cotton without any ornament whatsoever; her bright golden hair parted in the centre, was braided over her finely-formed forehead, and fastened behind in a plait. She rose as Mrs. Cheapstow entered, and courtesying modestly, but without embarrassment, remained standing.

"This is Colonel Cheapstow, Eleonora," said his wife.

Eleonora made a lower courtesy, with the same simplicity as before, and still continued standing. There was in her whole figure

and manner an air of resignation, which to those who knew her story had the appearance of dignified submission, particularly as the extreme paleness of her remarkably clear complexion heightened the general impression of melancholy, the action of her body, and the sound of her voice were calculated to convey.

Colonel Cheapstow desired her to be seated, in the tone of courteous civility natural to him at all times when he did not feel his own dignity encroached upon, and his wife clearly perceived that before he had spoken a quarter of an hour with her new favourite, all his scruples had vanished. She sent Eleonora to her own apartment on pretence of looking for something she wanted, and when she had left the room asked her husband, " what he thought now?"

" That she is a gentleman's child, certainly; there cannot be a doubt of it. There is a carriage of the body, and an expression

of countenance which never sprung from low birth. You observe that this girl has been out of the way of learning any of those things which she possesses in such a conspicuous degree, therefore they must be inherent; her manners have the unpretending simplicity of childhood, and though full of diffidence and respect, there is an innate propriety which flows from birth."

"Now, Cheapstow, you go beyond me; the moment I cast my eyes upon her I saw that she was superior and lady-like, and so did M'Alpin—still I could not be quite certain—I might have been deceived."

"You might have been deceived in beauty, and you might have been deceived in shining pretensions, or in great natural endowments of any kind;—but with her, in the midst of very engaging humility, there is a feeling of self-respect, which comes from an internal conviction, though subdued by circumstances. I think, as you say my dear, as we have no

children of our own, it will be as well to restore an officer's child to her own situation in society."

"Then it is a thing settled," said Mrs. Cheapstow, "to your satisfaction, to mine,—to the poor girls', and to our excellent friend the doctor's. Did I tell you that he is as much interested about Eleonora as either of us, and wished to make her independent, by settling a sum for her use."

"That is quite unnecessary my dear—this young person is under our protection now, and you can do what you choose for her, though it was certainly very kind of M'Alpin."

"Yes, and it was done when she was without friends. I have not spoken to him about taking her into our own family—I wished to have your opinion first."

"I shall write to the governors of the orphan school, and signify my wishes to them on this subject, in the mean time you can

make what arrangements you please, as there is no doubt of their granting a ready assent."

Mrs. Cheapstow was as active in carrying her wishes into execution, as she had been prompt in forming them, and spent the rest of the day with Eleonora in getting what was requisite for her proper appearance in her new situation, put into train, but with the assistance of a dozen additional durzees, she hoped to be able to accomplish it all before the Ruthven Castle was ready for sea.

CHAPTER XI.

Eventful day ! how hast thou changed my state,
Once on the cold and wintry shaded side
Of a bleak hill, mischance had rooted me
Never to thrive, child of another soil.
Transplanted now to the gay sunny vale,
Like the green thorn of May my fortune flowers.

HOME.

MRS. CHEAPSTOW saw with pleasure, that though her new protégée had received but little education, she had the capacity and disposition which made that little much to her. Eleonora's acquirements were confined to reading and writing, and the knowledge of arithmetic, which enabled her to keep the school-mistress's accounts of work done in

the house. In common with the other girls, she was perfect mistress of all the mysteries of embroidering, which was a considerable source of emolument to the school. Her sedate and contemplative turn of mind found pleasure in reading, and though she had but few books within her reach, she had bestowed more attention upon them than perhaps might have been done by many who enjoy a wider range and greater advantages.

The feeling that she was born in a different sphere, influenced her mind from a very early period, and at an age when other girls are only occupied about the passing hour, she endeavoured to fit herself for the society she thought she had a right to, and which the sanguine spirit of youthful hope promised she should one day enjoy. Her hours of labour had been more, and of recreation fewer than those of any one within the walls. From the time she could read without spelling, an acquirement very rarely made by any of

the other girls, Mrs. Patch employed her in teaching the younger children—in reading aloud upon Sundays, as they had no chaplain, and were too far from church to walk there in the sun; in writing her letters, and in keeping her accounts, and slender as such means of improvement were, Eleonora had profited by them, and early taught by hard necessity, acquired more practical knowledge of self-government than she might have done in a seemingly more favourable soil.

The little knowledge with which every school-girl is acquainted, had been entirely out of her reach—she had lived as much secluded as if she had been in a convent; of the usages of society, and the habits of the world she was utterly ignorant, but her sweetness of temper, and benevolence of mind, produced in her untaught manners the reality of politeness, and her native dignity of feeling and rectitude of intention, supplied, in material circumstances, the deficiency of experi-

ence, at least in the opinion of those who could feel propriety as well as understand it. The head, or where no head is, acquaintance with established rules, will prescribe what is fit to be done on ordinary occasions, but the heart only can dictate what is “virtuousest, discreetest, best,” and Eleonora had, by her undisguised manners and singleness of heart, before the day was done, convinced Mrs. Cheapstow that her efforts for the improvement of her protégée would at least be met half way by the grateful endeavours of an affectionate heart.

The dread of being compelled to some marriage, which she could not think of without terror, had lately preyed upon Eleonora’s spirits, assisted by climate which lends a tooth to every suffering, and given her mind a tone of melancholy, which it would require time to shake off. “Sorrow is wisdom,” or often the shortest road, if not the only one to its attainment, and the humiliat-

ing proposal of the tailor, which had been made some time ago, had first opened Eleonora's eyes to what she could not help considering as the degradation of her situation, though she tried sometimes to recollect that she should be grateful for the protection afforded her, when she remembered the circumstances in which she had been brought to the asylum, but her religious instruction was not sufficient to make such truths clear to her mind, and mere human reason, even in the most enlightened minds, is more disposed to feel gratitude to the instruments by which God dispenses his gifts, than to the Almighty giver.

On the day of Eleonora's being brought to the Orphan's Asylum, Mrs. Patch had questioned the child in hopes of being able to discover something of her parentage, but from that time she had been treated upon an exact footing with the other girls, and no more notice taken of her, until her little ac-

quirements began to make her useful to her mistress. There she got more work to do, and had more intercourse with her, without however any increase of kindness on the part of Mrs. Patch, or consequently of affection on that of Eleonora.

Mrs. Patch was an ordinary person in every sense of the word, and did her ordinary duties in the most ordinary way; she did not wish to take more trouble than she could help, and therefore turned over as much of it as she could to those about her, always endeavouring at the same time to convince them that she meant them a favour by accepting their services. When Eleonora returned to her at night, she easily drew from the happy girl an account of all that had passed, and the things which Mrs. Cheapstow had ordered for her. She had knowledge enough of the world to be certain as soon as she heard Eleonora's description of what her dresses were to be,

that Mrs. Cheapstow intended to introduce her into society.

“ You are a lucky girl,” she said, “ to meet with such friends, and to have such fine things, as a body may say, thrown at you. *I* have wrought here, and toiled late and early for these five-and-twenty years, and brought up one race of children after another, and seen them go out of this house, and nobody ever so much as thought of giving a new gown to me, for all my care and all my attention.”

“ Yes,” said Eleonora, untying a parcel which she had in her hand, “ one person did think of it, and here it is, and I hope you will like it, Mrs. Patch.”

“ Who would not like such a beautiful Europe silk ?” said the gratified mistress, holding it up in a full light. “ But where did you get it, Eleonora, my dear ?”

“ A man from the bazar came with a great many things to Mrs. Cheapstow, and

this amongst them, and I happened without thinking to say, how much you would like this silk, and Dr. M'Alpin—you remember the gentleman who was here this morning with Mrs. Cheapstow—said it was a good thought, and desired the man to lay this piece aside, and told me that I might take it you at night ; and I was so much obliged to him !”

“ It was really very handsome of him,” said Mrs. Patch, still examining her present, “ and very like a gentleman, and I am sure I am most excessively obliged to him, and I’ll tell him so the first time I see him ; and to you too, Eleonora, for perhaps if you had not mentioned me just then, he might not have thought of it—I always told you it was well to be thoughtful and attentive, and you see what comes of it,” she said, folding up her silk ; “ and your new friends, too, will think the more of you, for not forgetting the old. I dare say such a genteel, gentlemanly

man as the doctor, thought a great deal more of you, when he heard you speak of me, who have always been so kind to you."

Eleonora went to bed, to think over all the last day had produced for her; and when she found herself alone, surrounded by the objects she had known from infancy, could hardly persuade herself that it was not all a dream, and many times during the night she awaked with a start, and asked herself if it were indeed true, that she was to leave India and actually embark upon the blue sea she had so earnestly desired to cross, when she had heard Europeans talk of England, and call it "Home." She felt proud that she too was entitled to call it by that name,—it was the land which had given birth to her parents, and she taxed her memory to recall all she had ever read or heard, of a country which in her mind was the soil of every thing great or good.

The morning brought with it a thousand

new and anxious wishes; expectations had never before disturbed the monotonous round of her life, now her first hope was to see or hear from Mrs. Cheapstow, but the day passed without either message or visit, and another, and another after it. No time in her whole life had ever appeared of such an insupportable length. She thought when the sun rose, that he was going to remain for ever above the horizon, and when he set that he would never return again. The novelty of her hopes made their disappointment more bitter, particularly as Mrs. Patch had in a manner released her from her usual occupations, and left her at liberty to watch every hour on the clock, and to listen to every carriage which passed the road.

At length the almost despaired-of message did arrive, in the form of a note to Mrs. Patch, telling her that Colonel Cheapstow had settled every thing with the di-

rectors, of which she should have official intimation, and that Mrs. Cheapstow would come at sunset to take her young charge away. There was also a note enclosed for Eleonora, and a change of clothes was sent, which Mrs. Cheapstow desired she would put on and distribute whatever she possessed among her companions.

Eleonora's slender possessions were soon disposed of; there was nothing she wished to retain, but the little frock in which she was brought to school, and which, when she put on the dress of the house, Mrs. Patch had laid aside, in hopes that if any inquiry was ever made after her, it might be of service. She also wished to keep a few of her best patterns for embroidery, as she told Mrs. Patch now she would have nothing else to do but to work for Mrs. Cheapstow all day long. She took a kind farewell of those with whom she had so long eaten of the same bread, and drank of the same cup,

promising to write from England, and to send remembrances to every one of them. She dressed herself in the apparel which had been sent, and then sat down at the window which commanded the best view of the public road, to watch for Mrs. Cheapstow's arrival, but she was so much before the time, that after listening and waiting for a whole hour, she mounted to the top of the house, whence she actually discovered a carriage, which she easily recognised to be the one for which she was so anxiously looking.

Mrs. Cheapstow had brought with her a quantity of toys and little trinkets, which she gave to Eleonora to bestow among her young companions, who were perfectly transported with such marks of notice as no one had ever bestowed upon them before; while she settled all with Mrs. Patch, and paid for the work done, at the same time making a present to her on Eleonora's account, which disposed the schoolmistress

very much to rejoice in the good fortune of one whom she said she always thought would come to something.

Human happiness even when it has attained its utmost terrestrial perfection, is more like sorrow than joy,

In both we lose the balmy bliss of sleep,
In both we fever, and in both we weep :
In this alone the likeness disappears—
That joy's for moments, and that grief's for years.

And poor Eleonora's, as was natural, was a mingled feeling, and her tears fell fast at the final adieu, as she felt that she was leaving the only abode she had ever known ; but such is the inconsistency of even allowable human feelings, that they would have fallen still faster had she been told to remain.

When they were seated in the carriage, Mrs. Cheapstow questioned Eleonora, as to what she had been doing during the last three days.

She blushed deeply, and answered, " No-

thing ; for indeed I was afraid, madam, that you had forgotten me, or repented of what you had done, and I never was so miserable in my whole life.”

“ No ?” not when they were going to make you marry the tailor ?”

“ No, I think not ; for then I had no hopes to be disappointed, and I resolved, if they should kill me, not to comply.”

“ I did not know that you could make such strong resolutions.”

“ Nor did I until that time,” answered she with the utmost simplicity.

“ Well then, we shall let the subject rest ; and since it is so disagreeable to you, let it never be mentioned again. But while I recollect it, there is another thing I have to say to you—it is the custom in Europe for every one to have a surname, and I intend to call you Eleonora Cheapstow, and strangers in place of calling you Elconora, will call you, Miss Cheapstow.”

“I shall like that very much, madam. I know, at least I have heard, that every body in England has two names; but a great many of the girls in our house, have only one.”

Mrs. Cheapstow was delighted to observe, the first time that she produced her *protégée* amongst strangers, that she acquitted herself with great propriety. Eleonora had been accustomed to retirement, but not to solitude; therefore felt no sort of awkwardness in being amongst those with whom she was unacquainted, particularly as she was without a tincture of the vanity, which could make her suppose for a moment that she was an object of attention to them. She answered the questions which were addressed to her, with the open simplicity of childhood.

“The creature is so guileless,” thought Mrs. Cheapstow as she watched her words and actions, “that it will be easy to make

her every thing, that others would wish to appear."

Dr. M'Alpin had, as he declared, liked her bonny face and sweet manners, from the first moment he set eyes upon her ; and every day as he had an opportunity of becoming better acquainted with her, but increased the predilection.

Colonel Cheapstow's health was often so uncertain, as to keep him for days together almost entirely on his couch ; and when he was not too ill to be incapable of any alleviation, he usually occupied a sofa in the room where Mrs. Cheapstow and Eleonora superintended the durzees, whose utmost diligence was hardly sufficient to get all the additional work that was required of them, ready before the sailing of the ships.

Eleonora read to him when he could bear it, or did any thing she could think of to amuse him, and while away the hours

of pain and suffering, as it was impossible for his wife who had so many things indispensable for his comfort to procure, to be as much with him as she could have wished, and would have been in other circumstances.

Eleonora had, almost from the hour she came into his family, attached herself to his service with the attention of a dutiful child, conduct which, as it proceeded from the feelings of the heart, greatly endeared her to the friends by whom it was witnessed.

Before leaving Madras, both the doctor and Colonel Cheapstow had the satisfaction to receive letters from Captain Landless and Lieutenant Manning from Calcutta ; where Captain Landless informed them they had safely arrived after a tedious passage against the monsoon, having only lost five men from sickness,—a thing, he said, unheard of after such sufferings ; and they were now on the point of embarkation in the first

ships for Europe. He concluded by hoping to have the pleasure of meeting them all in London, at no very distant date.

Manning wrote to thank Dr. M'Alpin for the order upon his agents, which the doctor had sent him ; declining at the same time to make use of it, as he informed Dr. M'Alpin that upon his arrival in Calcutta he found he had more money of his own in his agent's hands than was sufficient for his present purposes. These letters were followed by one from Mr. Curzon, who sincerely sympathized in the dangers and losses of the friends in whom he was so much interested—Captain Landless had dined with him, and given him a particular account of all their sufferings—Major Middleton was in the habit of coming almost every evening to dine with him, and hear what intelligence he had received of “his good friend the doctor.” Young Ouseley, he told them, had left him to join his corps in the upper

provinces—Mrs. Harvey was still reposing on her couch, and Mr. Ascot's eight children running about wild just as usual.

“I hae gotten a house for you, Eleonora,” said the doctor, one day when he returned home to tiffin, “which will serve ye for the next four months; and I hope that ye are ready to take possession, and that your trunks are packed, for to-morrow morning the Ruthven Castle's anchor will be up.”

“To-morrow morning! Dr. M'Alpin, is it possible—an I really to leave India?—how curious, that to-morrow night I shall sleep upon the sea.”

“What cabin have you got, doctor?” inquired Mrs. Cheapstow.

“One of the booby hatches, just opposite to yours. I have told them to make it comfortable for our little lassie, and I just stepped into a cabinet-maker's, as I came through the Black Town, to order what was wanted, and I got a nice little hanging-

bookshelf with doors to keep your books from rolling about, Eleonora; and I got some books too for you to read, ye ken ye mustna be idle."

"And did you take all that trouble for me, Dr. M'Alpin? I should like to read night and day, that I might learn something of what every other person knows."

The morning came and Eleonora saw the time of embarkation to which she had looked as the commencement of a brighter era in her life at length arrive, and for the first time she actually stood on the very brink of that sea, which she had often feared would be to her for ever an impassable barrier, and she listened with dread to the hoarse murmurs of the formidable surf which ran along the shore, breaking in deafening clamours on the beach, and casting up all it encountered on its way "high and dry," as the seamen expressed it.

Going through the surf, which for several hundred miles runs along the Madras coast, is, even to those best acquainted with it, always an operation of danger, and to strangers, an exceedingly formidable undertaking, particularly in going out to the ships in the roads; as, in consequence of the violence with which it breaks, they cannot lie near the shore, and no boats, but the frail craft of the country, constructed of bark sewed together, which yields in a manner to the weight of the water, have ever been able to weather the surf. Possibly something may also be due to the boatmen, who, bred from infancy to the profession, know the exact place and moment when the swell will break. Every ship's boat which has tried it has been swamped in the experiment, and many experienced seamen lost, notwithstanding the catamarans which follow every boat that crosses the surf, to be at hand to

pick up the passengers should the boat go down, an accident, which the slightest neglect or oversight invariably occasions.

These catamarans are nothing more than two boards lashed together, and rowed by two men with short paddles, which they move alternately, first on the one side and then on the other, so as to produce a very droll effect, singing all the time.

It is difficult to conceive a more busy and noisy scene than Madras roads, when there are many ships at anchor, from the immense number of these small craft, mounting, like cockle-shells, on the foaming surfs, which in regular succession break along the shore. The men who navigate them are the letter-carriers and messengers between the ships and the town, and often go backwards and forwards when nothing larger dare venture through the surf. When a wave washes these "catamaran-jacks," as the sailors have named them, from their seats on their skiffs, they yield

to the fury of the water, and, as soon as it has passed, like ducks who have dived for a moment, leap upon their catamarans and recommence singing their own song, which is peculiar to the whole amphibious race, with perfect composure, until the next wave washes them off.

The accommodation-boats, intended for the conveyance of ladies, get their name from their having a seat at one end covered with an awning, and a board to keep the feet out of the water, which leaks into these spongy vessels so as to require incessant baling. That for our friends was in readiness upon the beach above the high water mark, wherein they soon seated themselves, and were waiting for the boatmen, who were slowly sauntering along the beach, "Look at those fellows," said the doctor, "I cannot help laughing when I mind what happened on that very spot when I arrived here a

griffin* thirty years ago. Two of my countrymen belonging to a Scotch regiment had just landed, a highland and a lowland officer, and I overheard the highlander ask his friend, pointing to a turtle which happened to be lying on his back and flapping his fins in the sun, ‘What na kind o’ a bird ca’ ye he?’—‘I dinna ken,’ answered the lowlander, ‘but he maun be a pet for his wings are clippit.’ I never laughed more in my life; but here our fellows come at last.”

The crew seized the boat by the prow and dragged her with great rapidity down the steep bank over the sand into the water, and then jumping in themselves, without losing an instant, seized the oars, and all shouting together, “Ullah! Ullah! Ullah! Ullah!” rowed with their utmost energy, and shot through the first surf. When it had passed under them they lay-to for a few

* A term applied to those who have not been a day or a year in this country.

minutes in the hollow of the sea, chanting a few notes as if to keep them in time, but all the while keeping a watchful eye upon the second surf, and as soon as the favourable moment presented itself a second dart was made, and they cleared it, and the catamaran-jacks who had been washed from their seats, regained their rafts which were dancing about in the swell.

“There’s a fine fellow,” said the doctor, observing one of them who seized his vagrant catamaran and jumped into his seat as easily as a dragoon would have done into his saddle. “There’s a fine fellow, and well worthy of the medals he wears.”

“Yes,” answered the head boatman, who spoke a little English; “he has done a great deal of work in his life: every medal round his neck was given to him for a life saved in the surf.”

“But he’ll no go without his reward,” said the doctor, “when we reach the ship.”

Another roll carried them clear off the surf without accident, and the boatmen took up their monotonous song, which they chanted without further interruption. When they reached the ship, both gentlemen took care that all those who had followed them through the surf should be liberally rewarded, as an encouragement to them to attend upon other boats, where their assistance might be really requisite.

Colonel Cheapstow, ill as he was before he left Madras, had still taken care to replace the comforts which had gone to the bottom of the Andaman's, and after he had been a few weeks at sea, gradually recovered the health he had lost upon that unfortunate occasion, and before they had rounded the Cape, had gained as much in appearance as he had in strength.

Dr. M'Alpin's principal pleasure on board ship had been to assist Eleonora in her reading; he had, as he told her before they came

on board, purchased several books expressly for her use, and had infinite satisfaction in instructing her in history and geography—knowledge which had not before come within her reach, and which to a mind like hers was as interesting as it was new.

“Good sense and right feeling,” he used to say to Mrs. Cheapstow, “are worth all the accomplishments in the world. Let Eleonora just cultivate the powers of mind, which nature has given her, and obtain worthy objects to exercise her thoughts and reasoning faculties, and she will be worth a bushel of those who pride themselves upon what they call their accomplishments—not that I am an enemy to accomplishments neither, but in our day too much is sacrificed to them.”

“You must not forget,” answered Mrs. Cheapstow, “that Eleonora is now our child, and that both Cheapstow and I love her as if she really were so, and that we would wish

that she should make the appearance in society which is indispensable, and I must certainly, as soon as we are in London, give her masters."

"But dinna forget that Eleonora is now passed the age when these things are begun, and it would be a great pity to lose the time which at present she can put to much better purpose; at all events, if she were mine I would not try to teach her any of these things unless she showed a very particular inclination for them; genius, as people call it."

"But it will be expected," joined the colonel, "that Miss Cheapstow should have a more elegant education, more suitable to her situation in life."

"There is nothing so suitable for every body's situation in life, as to know how to conduct themselves rightly in it, and I will just go back to what I first said,—if ye had got Eleonora when she was little, there is no

reason why you should not have taught her whatever you liked; but now it would be wasting her precious time, to begin with such things; and she has a mind, that will do honour to any situation, and procure more respect for her, than all the shining acquirements in the world."

"That would be the case, my excellent friend," replied Mrs. Cheapstow, "if the world were half as good or as wise as you are; but that *not* being the case, we must, if we would keep our situation in it, sacrifice something for the taste of the times;—now I agree with you in thinking that it will be better not to plague Eleonora with accomplishments, unless, as you say, she should show a genius for them."

"Eleonora is a good, dutiful girl," said the colonel, "and I am perfectly pleased with her as she is; but I would wish at the same time that she knew those things which would place her upon a proper footing in the

opinion of others—however, do as you please my dear, you are a better judge of what is fit for girls.”

“And I will in the mean time keep her at work just as usual,” said the doctor. “Her improvement is a pleasure to me, and sometimes brings back to my mind what my sister was at her age. With the exception of a sweet voice which could sing our ain bonny Scotch songs well, she had no more accomplishments than this poor lassie, though she had more book-learning.”

“Having no children I have never perhaps bestowed the attention upon things of the kind that I might otherwise have done,” said Mrs. Cheapstow, “so follow your own plan, doctor.”

Eleonora's days and weeks passed with pleasure and improvement, and in proportion as her mind opened to receive new ideas, she became more cheerful. Brought up in circumstances to force care even on childish

vivacity, and in a climate unfavourable to the flow of animal spirits, which is in young and active minds the almost constant concomitant of unimpaired health, melancholy had become in a manner the habit of her mind; and the good doctor, conscious, as he said, that there was “a time for all things,” laboured to dispel a feeling which he regarded as injurious and premature.

“Let her have a fresh flow of ideas,” he said to Mrs. Cheapstow; “let her read and know something of what has been done in the world, and the dark fogs, which till this time have bounded her horizon, will disappear. I like cheerfulness in young creatures, as much as the sun in spring. Melancholy is the rust of the mind, and poisons the springs of health;—there are shadows enough to every scene in this world, without dwelling on them at her years.”

CHAPTER XII.

How welcome from the dizzy mast,
The watchful seaman's stand,
Sounds o'er the billow and the blast
The joyful cry of "Land"—
Which veiled within a misty shroud,
Lifts o'er the wave its peak of cloud!

J. MALCOLM.

"You have never seen a mountain, Eleonora," said Dr. M'Alpin as soon as he heard that land was in sight, "come with me on deck and I will show you one."

"That is a cloud," said Eleonora, straining her eyes in the direction he pointed out to her.

“Look again,” he said, “through this telescope and tell me now what you see.”

“An immense dark mass appearing above the clouds.”

“Ay,” answered the doctor. “Those are the mountains, then, of St. Helena.”

Every moment as the vessel held on her swift and steady way the features of the island became more visible—the outlines more distinct—the lights and shadows more defined, and the peaks separated from each other, showing range within range, while Eleonora beheld with wonder nearly approaching to awe, the extraordinary productions of nature, which, from the rapidity of the vessel’s motion, seemed almost to start out of the water before her.

Neither verdure softened, or herbage shaded the bare bald forehead of these stupendous rocks, where they rose in barren nakedness and freshness as if recently torn asunder by giant power and exposed in

all their inaccessibility to the war of the elements and force of the ocean. In vain the waves rolled in ceaseless succession on their immovable base, and broke in white spray on their rugged face, filling their flinty fissures with myriads of trickling streams, there was but one spot in the whole circuit of that stone-bound island where any communication could take place between the sea and the shore, and that spot was the little bay joining the narrow valley in which James Town lies.

When the Ruthven Castle came within gunshot of the formidable batteries which crown every point to which the labour of man has sculptured a path, a gun pealed over their heads like a messenger from a higher sphere commanding them to bring to, until it was ascertained that there was no disorder on board to prevent their approach. When this necessary ceremonial was passed, they stood in shore, and soon

came to anchor in face of the town which lay in a long straggling slip up the narrow valley at the head of the bay, the entrance guarded by strong fortifications and guns of heavy metal. *Ladder hill*, which takes its name from the zigzag route, which incredible industry, has graven on its otherwise inaccessible sides, stands sentinel on the right of the landing, wreathed with cannon, sufficient to blow any ship out of the water, which dared to approach without permission given. The left of the little harbour is also defended by the same formidable artillery. Imagination cannot picture any thing more imposing than the appearance of these rocky mountains, their rugged feet washed by the open ocean, and their bare summits crowned by the engines of death, able to discharge their shafts like the bolts of heaven, from an elevation which makes retaliation or resistance equally hopeless.

Eleonora could not define her feelings as she gazed upon this scene. It suggested ideas new, and delightful, and with the earnest anticipation of unbroken hope, she longed for a nearer examination of a place, which had attracted more of her attention than any other had ever done. Her mind had lately opened to the reception of ideas whose novelty deepened their impression ; she felt the world to be full of beauty, and magnificence, and grandeur, and she believed that if she could inspect it more minutely, she would find it more lovely. Dr. M'Alpin had, perhaps without intending it, brought forward this latent feeling ; for enthusiasm naturally elicits a corresponding emotion in those minds where nature has placed it, dormant though it may have remained. His poetic taste had not, in his ordinary intercourse with the world, found much room for indulgence ; his excellent friends, Colonel and Mrs. Cheapstow, with

whom so many years of his life had been passed, laughed at this as one of his little weaknesses.

Though both good people in their own separate way, the *beau-idéal*, natural or moral, made no part of their speculations ; consequently the worthy doctor was much delighted to find that in Eleonora he had a pupil who would hear all his opinions without criticism, and take pleasure in his readings and recitations, and listen with unwearying attention to his descriptions of the beauties of his own country, which he promised himself great pleasure some day in showing her. To those who have no experience of how the doctor's life had passed at a distance from his own family, and from the society of young people in general, it may seem strange, that at his years, he should feel such a lively interest, without any selfish motive, in a creature of Eleonora's age, or at least that he should choose

her as the participator of his favourite fancies, but so it was ; and Mrs. Cheapstow often laughingly declared to her adopted daughter that she would be jealous of her regard for Dr. M'Alpin.

As soon as the vessel was at anchor, the passengers prepared to go on shore ; fortunately for the lovers of the picturesque, they had a general officer amongst the number, who landing in full uniform was received with the salute due to his rank ; the guns boomed overhead, and wreaths of white smoke and multiplied echoes ran round the mountains. They landed on a little quay cut out of the rock, the steps of which are wet and slippery from the continual breaking of the surf. On the left of this landing-place a large cave hollowed out of the rock which towers above, and bedded by hard white sand, affords the only bathing-place on the island.

Landed on the beach our party stopped

for a moment to regard the formidable line of cannon extending across this single inlet. It was impossible not to admire the curious mixture of rural quiet and military strength joined to the most remarkable neatness and economy of space. Where a habitation could be planted, or a garden excavated, the encroachment has been made, and they hang over each other in terraces covered with trailing plants. In all other places, nature seems freely to have afforded surface for the habitation of man ; in St. Helena, alone, he seems to be an unwelcome intruder upon her particular domain.

Colonel Cheapstow, with his family, walked up to one of the principal boarding-houses, and soon secured accommodation for the time they were to remain on shore. In a place like James Town the arrival of Indiamen, either from England or India, is too important an event not to be generally known, and Colonel Cheapstow and Dr.

M'Alpin had not been an hour in their new lodging, before they received visits from the principal officers in the garrison, and numerous hospitable invitations.

Amongst these visitants was a handsome young man in a naval uniform, who as soon as the ceremonies of introduction were over, addressed the doctor:

“I was in hopes, sir, when I heard your name, that you were from Bengal, but I find your ship is from Madras.”

“We are last from Madras, but who of my name do you inquire for in Bengal?” answered the doctor, earnestly gazing upon the open and expressive countenance before him. “I think I should know your features,” he said with some emotion, “but who do you inquire for?”

“Dr. James M'Alpin, the brother of my mother.”

The doctor rose, and folded the young man in his arms. “And is it even so?” he

said. "I could not be mistaken in the features of my sister's son; this is a happiness I little expected. And what am I to call you? Are ye Hugh, the eldest?"

"No, my dear uncle," answered his nephew, warmly returning the doctor's cordial grasp. "I have not that good fortune. I am but the laird's brother, plain Malcolm Sinclair, or if you like it better, Lieutenant Sinclair of his Majesty's ship *Sea-flower*."

"Mrs. Cheapstow, Miss Cheapstow," said the doctor, turning to the ladies, who had quietly enjoyed this mutual recognition; "Allow me to present to you my sister's son, my nephew, Lieutenant Sinclair."

Mrs. Cheapstow felicitated both uncle and nephew on their fortunate meeting. Eleonora courtesied to the stranger, and told the doctor in a low voice how happy she was in an event which would give him so much pleasure. Colonel Cheapstow shook hands with Mr. Sinclair, whom he said he could

not consider as a stranger, being so nearly connected with one of his oldest, and dearest friends.

The young man, happy in the discovery he had just made, received the kindness of his new friends with the open frankness of an affectionate heart, and the gentlemanly ease of an independent character.

Mrs. Cheapstow, who was an attentive observer of what had passed, saw at once that the doctor had not only found his sister's son whom, if he had been different to what he appeared to be, he would rejoice to find, because he could call him by that epithet,—but a nephew who was worthy of affection for his own sake, and whose manners and appearance were equally prepossessing. Mrs. Cheapstow had remarked the expression of his countenance, and the tone of his voice when he spoke of his mother, and heard her mentioned by his uncle, and she felt convinced, that at that moment his heart

rejoiced in seeing the brother of his beloved parent, whom he was prepared to love and respect.

“In this youth, at least,” she thought, “he will have one relative who will see more merit in him than his immense fortune, and I am happy to think, that there is at least one in his family who resembles himself. If we had the good fortune, Cheapstow,” she said, “to have such a son as that to meet us, how different would be our return to our native land!”

The doctor and his nephew had retired to give and receive intelligence of domestic concerns, and did not again make their appearance until the hour of dinner, when the doctor as usual handed Mrs. Cheapstow to table, leaving Eleonora to the care of his nephew. They dined at the *table d'hôte* of their own house, where there were several strangers, Colonel Cheapstow taking his

place as he always did between the ladies of his own party.

Dr. M'Alpin, as soon as he was seated, began speaking to Mrs. Cheapstow of his nephew, in whom he seemed to fancy he had recovered his lost sister.

“Would you believe it, Mrs. Cheapstow,” he said, “I had not been half an hour with that boy, before I began speaking to him, as I used to do to his mother? I could not help thinking that my own dear Marian was come back to me. His sentiments and his expressions are just hers; he is something older, to be sure, than she was when we parted, but the likeness is wonderful—he has her generosity of feeling, and warmth of heart, and he seems too, to have steadiness and judgement above his years, though we must not altogether look for an old head upon young shoulders.”

“Nothing,” replied Mrs. Cheapstow, “for a long time has given me greater pleasure than this meeting, doctor. Cheapstow

agrees with me in thinking that in this young man your sister has left you a valuable legacy."

The doctor regretted the impossibility of his nephew's accompanying him to England, as he belonged to one of the ships on duty in the roads, but which was soon expected to be relieved, when it was probable she would return to Britain.

Malcolm Sinclair had in the mean time been entertaining Eleonora with an account of all that was to be seen in the island.— "You must visit Longwood, Miss Cheapstow," he said, "and make a pilgrimage to Napoleon's grave."

"I hope we shall," answered Eleanora, "your uncle talked of it before we landed."

"Oh, if it depends on him," said Malcolm, "it will soon be settled, I shall not let him forget it. What do you do to-morrow?"

"Go to the governor's, I believe, for there is an invitation for us."

"I know. General and Mrs. Monkland,

perfectly well, and I have a general invitation to the house," replied Malcolm, "therefore I shall have the pleasure to attend you; and next day, if there is nothing better to be done, we must beat up the island for conveyances, and set forth on our excursion. I assure you it will repay you for your trouble."

"I have not the least doubt of it," answered Eleonora, who found herself talking with as much freedom to the doctor's nephew as she had been in the habit of doing lately with himself. "I have earnestly wished to see this island, since Dr. M'Alpin described it to me, and have been delighted with it from the first moment we came in sight of its rocky shores. These are the first mountains I have ever 'seen, and yet, when I did see them, they brought back something to my mind like a dream, as if I had known such things before."

"Some minds are made to receive power-

ful impressions of the great beauties of nature, and give back the reflection like a mirror. I suppose Miss Cheapstow, that is the case with you ?”

“ I wish it may be so,” answered Eleonora, unconscious of the implied compliment, “ for then in this beautiful world I shall have pleasure without end.”

The air with which Eleanora spoke, had the stamp of such perfect sincerity that her auditor could not help wondering where she had lived, to have such expectations. He was accustomed to the frankness and simplicity of many of his own countrywomen, who in the retirement of their straitened domestic circle, rarely imagine any thing but the *beau-idéal* of human nature—but such entire want of knowledge of the world he had never before met with.

“ You must have seen a great deal of India, Miss Cheapstow ?” he inquired.

“ No; since I can remember, literally

nothing. I do not know that twice in my life I was ever out of the compound of our house at Madras. I saw the sea from the top of the house, and oh, how often and how earnestly I have wished to be a bird, and to fly over it, and see what was on the other side; or to be in one of the ships that ran along so beautifully!"

Malcolm's curiosity was greatly excited by this account of absolute seclusion, but he felt it would be taking an ungenerous advantage to satisfy the desire he had by asking further questions, and he resolved to restrain it, until he had an opportunity of talking with his uncle.

When that was the case, in the course of the evening, he received a full detail of all the particulars known and conjectured, regarding poor Eleonora's mysterious fate, and with the spirit of his years, was highly delighted with the part Mrs. Cheapstow and his uncle had acted in the first instance,

and Colonel Cheapstow in the second. The idea of her marrying in such circumstances, was sacrilege in his eyes, and he was almost disposed to quarrel with any one for repeating such a presumptuous absurdity. This history lost nothing by being told by the doctor, nor did he forget to recount the amiable traits he had observed in Eleonora's character, in support of his opinion that she was by birth a gentlewoman, and he concluded by saying, "There is a purity in her mind which is not often found in any situation, and is least of all to be looked for where she came from; but it just teaches us, Malcolm, that nature will not be at all times broken down, or rooted up by circumstances. She sees every thing in the pure light of her own guileless disposition, and expects all things to be without spot."

"I think," answered Malcolm, "that our dispositions form a kind of medium of vision, if we may use the phrase, through

which we see the world, and every thing in it—the different lights within, colour the objects without.”

“There is no doubt of it, Malcolm, and it is only experience which undeceives us.”

Next morning, the governor, according to his promise, politely sent one of his carriages to convey his expected guests to his seat, at some miles distance from the capital of his sea-girt isle. Eleonora had been up at an early hour to mark the singular appearance of the rising sun, which Mr. Sinclair had described to her. The valley, or rather ravine, in which James Town stands, is so narrow and deep, that the bright rays of the morning sun gild the mountain-tops overhead, while it was night in the town below,—a peculiar and picturesque effect, which is perhaps only to be witnessed in St. Helena.

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